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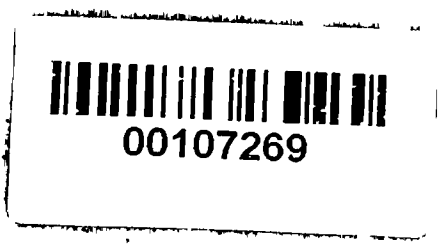

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FROM THE YALU TO PORT ARTHUR

William Maxwell.

(Taken in the Mou-tien-ling Pass.)

Frontispiece

FROM THE YALU TO PORT ARTHUR

A PERSONAL RECORD.

107269

BY

WILLIAM MAXWELL,

Lately Special Correspondent of *The Standard*, now of *The Daily Mail*.

WITH 33 ILLUSTRATIONS AND 3 MAPS.

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PREFATORY NOTE.

So many accounts have been written of the War between Russia and Japan that apology may be demanded for adding another to these records. My excuse is that a very limited number of European and American correspondents accompanied the Japanese Army, and that I may claim to be the only correspondent who was with General Kuroki from the Yalu to the Shaho; and, with my interpreter, Mr. Ito, the only observer, European, American or Japanese, present at these engagements, and at the last assaults upon and surrender of Port Arthur.

To General Kuroki and the Officers of his Staff I am under many obligations. Especially am I indebted to General Fujii, Chief of the Staff, who showed me many favours and gave me much valuable information which now appears for the first time.

In the opening chapter will be found a short summary of the events that led to the War. It contains matter that may throw a little new light upon some phases of the diplomatic struggle. In the appendix are studies of the Russian and Japanese Armies which were issued as confidential papers before the War. I commend them to the close attention of all who have a professional interest in military science.

WILLIAM MAXWELL.

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From the Yalu to Port Arthur

Chapter I

THE ORIGIN OF THE WAR.

For the origin of the war between Russia and Japan we must glance back over three centuries. After the famous expedition of 1592-8, Korea was bound to Japan by the closest ties. It was an independent Kingdom in "political intercourse" with the Japanese as distinguished from countries like Holland and China, whose relations were purely commercial. For this reason the Government at Seoul was notified in 1869 of the overthrow of the Shagunate and the restoration of the Imperial Authority. Ignorant of events beyond her own borders, and animated by a spirit of aggressive conservatism, Korea refused to acknowledge the new Government and returned a defiant and insulting answer to the representations of the Mikado.

Upon this issue the newly organised Government in Japan was divided. One party was for vindicating the national honour by appeal to arms; the other party was for peace at any price. The peace party prevailed and Field Marshal Saigo, who more than any other man

was responsible for the new order of things and for the restoration of the Imperial power, withdrew from public life. Trusted and beloved by the people, he was followed into retirement by several hundred soldiers and civilians who held office under the new Government. When Saigo emerged from privacy it was as leader of the rebellion of 1877, which was quelled after a sanguinary struggle that lasted eight months.

Meanwhile the Koreans were encouraged to acts of aggression, and a Japanese gun-boat, taking soundings near Chemulpo, was fired upon. The fort was attacked and the garrison dispersed. Recognising the Chinese claim of suzerainty over Korea, the Japanese entered into negotiations in Pekin. But the Government of China declined to be responsible for the acts of this tributary kingdom, and declared that the Koreans had complete liberty to do whatever they liked in all matters of State, whether internal or external. Upon this repudiation of her suzerain power, the Japanese despatched a mission to Korea and a treaty was made between the two countries. The preamble to that document contains a precise declaration that Korea is "an independent country, equal to Japan."

As soon as the danger was past, China, after her wont, sought to reassert her claim to suzerain power. By stealthy and underhand means she strove to regain her authority over Korea. Chinese interference in the foreign affairs of the Hermit Kingdom became acute in 1882 and was the cause of the riots at Seoul. These

disturbances were directed against the Japanese colony and legation, and, being met by intrigues on the part of the Japanese residents, were responsible for the war between China and Japan in 1894-5.

No sooner had peace been concluded than Russian intrigue took the place of Chinese, and Japan found herself threatened by a more persistent and formidable rival for control over her neighbour Korea. Having just been deprived of the fruits of victory by a coalition of Russia, France and Germany, the Japanese were not prepared to enter immediately upon a struggle with the Czar. They accordingly came to terms with Russia, and on May 14th, 1896, an agreement was entered into at Seoul between Baron Komura, *chargé d'affaires*—now Minister of Foreign Affairs and chief negotiator of the treaty of peace at Portsmouth—and M. J. Waeber, the representative of Russia. In the same year another agreement was made at Moscow between the Marquis Yamagata—now chief of staff at Imperial Head-Quarters—and Prince Lobanoff.

The vital part of that agreement is in the clause which states that "with the object of relieving Korea from financial embarrassment, Russia and Japan counsel the Government to suppress all useless charges and to establish equilibrium between expenditure and revenue.

"If after the introduction of reforms recognised to be indispensable, it becomes necessary to have recourse to external loans, the two Governments (Russia and Japan) will in common accord lend their support

to Korea. The Governments of Japan and Russia will endeavour, as far as the financial and economic situation of the countries will admit, to leave to Korea the creation and maintenance of an armed force of native police sufficiently large to preserve internal order without foreign assistance. In the event of the contracting parties desiring more precise or detailed definition, or in the event of other points arising on which it may be necessary to act in concert, the representatives of the two Powers shall be charged with the duty of arriving at a friendly understanding."

This treaty is the basis of the report that the Marquis Ito was desirous of forming an alliance, not with Great Britain, but with Russia. The ink was hardly dry before the Russian Government began to display that bad faith which has characterised her policy in the East. M. Alexieff, an official in the Treasury at St. Petersburgh, who is not to be confused with the Admiral of the same name who figured so prominently later on, was despatched as a sort of financial agent; and several Russian military agents under the familiar guise of "instructors" were imposed upon the King at Seoul, who was informed that the number would be increased to twenty-six.

The Japanese Government was not made cognisant of these acts of "pacific penetration," nor was its opinion invited. As soon as the Government in Tokyo became aware of the presence of these Russian agents at Seoul, its representative at St. Petersburg was instructed to enter a protest, and to point out that the action of the

Russian Government was in violation of the spirit of the agreement between the Marquis Yamagata and Prince Lobanoff. Count Muravieff was at that time Minister of Foreign Affairs, Prince Lobanoff having died in the interval. The new Minister declared that the appointment of these advisers and instructors was the act of Prince Lobanoff. While disclaiming responsibility, Count Muravieff urged that the Emperor of Korea was an independent Sovereign and that Russia could not well refuse his request for agents and advisers. He promised, however, that no more "military instructors" should be sent to Seoul, though it was impossible to recall those already there.

This discussion was protracted with exasperating delays until news reached Tokyo of the occupation of Kiao-chiao by Germany. Remembering the part played by Germany after the war with China, the Japanese not unnaturally suspected another act of collusion with Russia, and their representative in St. Petersburg was instructed to invite an expression of opinion on the subject. Count Muravieff treated the occupation as of no consequence. The Russian Government, he remarked, did not look upon the matter very seriously. The action of Germany was instigated by the desire of the Emperor to stimulate enthusiasm for the expansion of the navy and not by any motive of aggression in the Far East. Accordingly, the Russian Government could take no step and could enter no protest against the German occupation of a Chinese port.

That Kiao-chiao was the first card laid upon the table in this game of diplomatic "bluff" was quickly apparent. Russia had already made up her mind to acquire Port Arthur, and, with it, command of the Eastern Seas. On the last day of the year 1897 Count Muravieff dined with the Czar and the Empress Dowager, and on the first day of the New Year he had an interview with the Japanese Minister at St. Petersburg. The Count declared that the Czar was desirous of arriving at an understanding about Korea on the basis of recognising the preponderant interest of Japan in that country; Russia having there no interest other than political and that of no great importance. The Empress Dowager, added Count Muravieff, had expressed similar opinions, and they were anxious to learn the views of the Japanese.

The Minister replied that nothing would be more welcome to the Japanese Government, for ever since the Chinese war they had been very desirous of coming to such an understanding about Korea. He himself, as the Count well knew, had, throughout a whole year, endeavoured to bring about an agreement of that kind, but had not succeeded. Invited to name a day for beginning the negotiations, Count Muravieff displayed no convincing alacrity. He had authority to do no more than communicate the desire of the Czar and to ask in a general way the views of the Japanese Minister. Further consideration was necessary and at an early and convenient day he would make another communication.

The next step was taken in Tokyo, in January, 1898, when the Russian Minister informed the Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs that Russia would support the "commercial and industrial interests" of Japan in Korea, and was prepared to come to an understanding on that basis. Experience had taught the Japanese to be wary in their dealings with Russian diplomacy, and Tokyo required a pledge of good faith. Before *pourparlers* began, the Czar must recall from Korea his "financial adviser" and "military instructors."

Again Russia displayed no unseemly haste. While the Czar was deliberating, a confidential information from China came to the Japanese Government to the effect that Russia was demanding a long lease of Port Arthur. There was the secret of this complacence toward Germany and of these tentative offers to Japan. It was added that the Chinese Government "would not reply in haste," but would take advantage of its reputation for never doing to-day what could be put off till the morrow.

In the month of March an unforeseen incident arose in Korea which solved the problem of "financial and military advisers." M. Speyer, formerly Russian Minister in Tokyo, had been transferred to Seoul, with the promise that he should succeed to the representation in Pekin. M. Speyer was a conscientious diplomatist, and when the Emperor of Korea refused to accept certain proposals made by his Russian "financial and military advisers," he issued an ultimatum. His

Majesty was allowed twenty-four hours to decide whether he had need of these advisers.

M. Speyer would not have laid such a trap for himself and M. Alexieff if he had not been convinced that the Emperor would be terrified into acceptance of every demand. But His Majesty, assured of support from another quarter and aware of the dispute between Russia and Japan, showed unexpected firmness. After three days' delay he informed M. Speyer that he had no further need of Russian advisers, and, "with many thanks for past services," discharged them from their engagements. Here was an *impasse* from which there was no escape without betraying the determination of the Czar not to relax his hold on Korea.

In St. Petersburg it was recognised that their representative had managed the business badly and had defeated their carefully laid scheme. M. Speyer accordingly did not go to Pekin, but was sent to vegetate at Rio Janeiro. This incident removed every obstacle to agreement on the subject of Korea, and on April 25th, 1898, was signed the Nissi and Rosen Convention, which solved the problem of Russian advisers.

Russia was the more ready to make this concession because nearly a month before—on March 27—a convention had been signed in Pekin, whereby China ceded to the Czar the use of Port Arthur, Talien and the adjacent country. Count Muravieff was evidently convinced that the withdrawal of the Russian advisers

from Korea and the formal recognition of Japan's interest in that country would be regarded in Tokyo as ample compensation for the occupation of Port Arthur. He boldly expressed this opinion in an interview with the Japanese Minister, who pointed out that, after all, this was a very one-sided arrangement, inasmuch as, while Japan's preponderant interests in Korea were admitted, she was expressly forbidden by the Nissi-Rosen convention to appoint advisers to the Emperor of Korea.

The occupation of Wei-hai-wei by Great Britain followed soon afterwards. Russia clearly anticipated this move, for in April Count Muravieff caused the Japanese Government to understand that, if they desired it, China would give an assurance that, after the withdrawal of the Japanese troops, Wei-hai-wei should not be conceded to any other Power. Russia was prepared to assent to such an assurance, and was willing to use her efforts to induce the other Powers to accept that arrangement. From this act of amazing self-denial Russia was saved by the Japanese and British Governments. Japan declared that she had no wish to impose such a condition in the terms of evacuation, and Great Britain, with the connivance of the Government in Tokyo, and in despite of Russia, calmly stepped into Wei-hai-wei.

These facts, which cannot be disputed, afford abundant evidence of the extreme moderation of the Japanese demands. They prove that the Japanese

manifested no hostility to the Russian occupation of Port Arthur, but were prepared to make great concessions in order to secure the heritage of Korea, to which they were entitled by conquest, by "pacific penetration," and by the necessities of geographical position. But appetite comes with eating. Having absorbed Port Arthur and begun on Manchuria, Russia saw no reason why she should not have Korea also. When her Imperial company promoters and traders crossed the Yalu, Japanese patience was exhausted. Her fleet and army had been more successful than her diplomatists, and were more ready to accept the challenge. The Anglo-Japanese alliance—the sequel to the Russian occupation of Manchuria after the Boxer trouble—ensured for her a fair fight, and Japan proceeded to demonstrate to an amazed world that the Muscovite giant, who had long overshadowed the East, has feet of clay and the hollowness of sounding brass."

Chapter II

JAPANESE STUDY OF THE RUSSIAN ARMY.

THE issues of war are not determined by numbers and bank balances. If victory depended on these factors the British Empire would never have been created. Our forefathers happily knew not the law of military science that judges the strength of an army by its size. They were conscious of another factor that cannot be expressed in figures, in differences of armament or even in the genius of commanders. This factor is the spirit of the army. Intangible as the law of gravitation, it cannot be stated in terms of any known value, yet it gives momentum to the mass, and without it discipline is but blind obedience, and courage the mere absence of fear. The duty of military science should be to determine this factor not less than to ascertain the numerical strength and armament of an enemy.

Mindful of this duty the Japanese studied the character of the Russian soldier and found him lacking in qualities that make an army invincible. The best testimony I can offer on this subject is a confidential paper written by General Fujii, Chief of the Staff of General Kuroki's Army and Commandent of the Staff College. It is a concise and modest document, yet it contains psychological truths of greater value than columns of facts and figures.

It is clear from this official survey that the Japanese did not accept the European estimate of the fighting capacity of their enemy. A military *attaché* who was in a large measure responsible for British official opinion of the Russian army exclaimed after the battle of Liao-yang: "My reputation is gone! For years I have been urging that Russian troops are invincible and here am I running away with them every day!"

The Staff in Tokyo were under no delusion. After careful study and observation they discovered the weak places in the Muscovite armour and were never for a moment doubtful of the issue. They knew the capacity of the Russian officer, his want of initiative, his proneness to jealousy and divided counsel, his readiness to put personal interest and comfort before every other consideration.

Among the multitude of things left behind by the Russians in their retreat from Liao-yang not the least interesting and valuable were the general orders issued from day to day by their Commander-in-Chief. They disclose the gravest defects in the discipline of the army, and more especially of the Cossacks. It appears from them that the Colonel of one Cossack regiment was removed from his command for deserting a post of great importance at the mere rumour of the approach of the enemy and without writing to inform the force to his immediate front—a defection that endangered the whole movement. Two Colonels of the 23rd East

Siberian Regiment were cashiered for reasons not stated, and the Commanding Officer of the 3rd Ural Cossacks was dismissed the service for conduct unworthy of an officer and for habitual drunkenness. These are only a few examples of the looseness of discipline in the higher commissioned ranks. Numbers of Russian officers, according to the testimony of British and French Missionaries in Liao-yang, were drinking with courtesans while their regiments were fighting at the front. Many also were censured by General Kuropatkin for discussing in public the conduct of the war and the character of their seniors in rank.

The state of affairs disclosed in these documents confirmed the Japanese in their opinion that the Russians were inferior to themselves in discipline and training, and will strengthen the conviction of all who have mingled with Russian military and naval officers that the army officer is often a person of inferior character and social position. So marked, indeed, is the distinction, that Russian naval officers rarely accept on a footing of social equality their comrades in the army.

Of General Kuropatkin as Commander-in-Chief the Japanese staff never entertained a very high opinion. They were inclined to the opinion of Skobeleff under whom Kuropatkin laid the foundation of his reputation. "You are an ambitious man and will have a fine career, but do not forget my advice. Never accept an independent post in which you will have to direct

affairs." The truth is that after the battle of the Yalu, the Japanese refused to accept the European opinion that General Kuropatkin was a great strategist and skilful in manœuvre.

"He lost his opportunity after the Yalu," said General Fujii, than whom there is no more competent critic. "Kuropatkin may be a great organiser, but in the field he is not to be feared."

Neither did the Japanese understand the chorus of praise over Kuropatkin's "masterly retreats." They have not reached the decadent stage which accepts even successful retreat as a proof of military capacity. The Japanese estimate of the Russian General may be given in one sentence from the lips of a distinguished soldier: "He never attempts any great movement, but is always content with nibbling and retiring."

While not under-rating the courage of the Russian soldier, the Japanese looked upon him as an ignorant and stupid peasant, who is easily depressed by failure.

"They are an imperfectly educated, strongly religious and *naive* sort of people. If there is a great hero to lead and set them an example they are not men to fear death, as was seen at Plevna, where they piled up corpses for earthworks and dashed into the enemy's trenches. Yet if they meet any little reverse they are at once terrified and panic-stricken, and run away in confusion. It is therefore necessary to frighten them in the beginning."

I am quoting from the confidential study of the Russian army, to which I would add the practical

comment of an officer who fought from the Yalu to the Sha-ho: "We always win in the last ten minutes, because the Russians will not stay long enough."

Their infantry often charge with the bayonet, but they have little skill in its use, and none at all in individual encounter."

And what of the Cossack, about whom tradition has woven a dazzling and invincible fame? The Japanese dismiss him with mild contempt, which events have justified.

"The Cossack in the war of 1877 made no heroic movement. His reputation is built entirely on his own reports, which are always exaggerated. He invariably retires when met by a stronger force. If our infantry is a little careful we need have no fear of the Cossack."

In this estimate of the Russian army I have abstained from expressing any personal opinion, knowing that it would be valueless. Those who have any curiosity to study the Japanese view will be rewarded by consulting General Fujii's paper, which will be found in the appendix. I would add only this tribute to the bravery of the Russian soldiers. If they do not know how to fight they know at least how to die. Never except over the ruins of Fort Shishishan in the last days of Port Arthur have I seen the white flag.

Chapter III

THE JAPANESE SOLDIER AND RUSSIAN OPINION.

THE soldier in the field is always an interesting study. The absence of those influences that regulate habits and manners in cities : the communism and openness of his life all tend to make him the natural man, to bring out his true character and to develop in him the manly qualities—patience, self-restraint, ingenuity and courage.

In none of these qualities is the Japanese soldier deficient. He has the patience of Job, and centuries have fixed in him the habit of self-restraint. His ingenuity is characteristic of an artistic race. He adapts himself readily to his environment. Whether billetted in the wretched and filthy hovels of Korea, in the spacious, solid and dirty houses of China, or on the bleak hillside, he makes himself at home. In a few hours the place is clean and tidy, and a spray of hawthorn or wild peach reminds him of the cherry blossom at home. By instinct and habit the Japanese are a clean people, and there is not in the world a cleaner army. Their food is simple and wholesome : they rarely drink anything stronger than boiled water ; their regard for

sanitary laws is great, and, as I shall presently show, the mortality in the field from disease is so small as to be almost incredible.

Of the courage and discipline of the Japanese soldier we have convincing proof in the Boxer trouble. A trained observer has put on record: "The admirable spirit shown by all ranks; their reckless courage and absolute disregard for danger and their perfect discipline . . . cannot be too highly praised." It is a common error to suppose that the Japanese acquired their skill in war with the adoption of modern arms and European dress. The truth is that they have been a race of warriors for ages. Until long after the middle of the last century they lived under feudal lords exactly as our forefathers lived in the days of the Black Prince. The habits and instincts formed under feudal conditions are still strong. The spirit of obedience is paramount, and there is no danger that the Japanese soldier will not face at the command of his officer. That allegiance which he paid to his feudal lord he has given to his Emperor, who is the fountain of all virtues and the source of every victory.

To many it may seem strange that from a hostile community of military clans there has sprung in less than half a century a nation instinct with the most fervid patriotism. Like many other "miracles" in Japan, this is a natural phenomenon, and was visible in Scotland as far back as the days of the Stuarts. Whatever its origin there is no gainsaying the patriotism. It is strong and

relentless as the sea, and has carried the Japanese army over many bloody leagues.

His endurance is not less remarkable than his courage. He can march far, work hard, and fight like a Trojan on a handful of rice, a few slices of the root of the lotus and a pickled plum. He never grumbles at "fatigue" work. The word "grouse" has no place in the soldier's vocabulary. He will pull a gun through the mire, make a road over the swamp, and drag a heavily-laden cart as cheerfully as he will charge a trench filled with riflemen.

Another advantage the Japanese army can claim. It is well officered. The men to whom are entrusted not merely brigades but regiments and companies may be relied upon to show the finest qualities that the profession of arms can develop. Yet if I was asked to state in one sentence why the Japanese have been victorious in every battle on sea and land, I would say: "It is because every Japanese goes into action determined to die, and it is therefore the other man who dies."

How did the Russians regard the Japanese? What estimate did they form of the fighting qualities of their enemy? That the Russians had made careful study of the Japanese army is manifest from confidential papers found upon prisoners. These documents, which will be seen in the appendix to this volume, are the work of an experienced soldier. The technical parts dealing with the constitution, training, discipline, and methods of fighting are instructive. But, for the moment, it is the

Japanese Marching Order: Front View.

Japanese Marching Order: Back View.

[*facing p.* 18

deductions and generalisations that interest. How inaccurate and misleading these are may be judged from one or two examples.

"The Japanese infantry never attack with the bayonet; they believe that against the modern rifle bayonet attacks are impracticable, and that the issue must be decided by powder and shot. . . . They do not recognise the necessity of continuing the fight within reach of the bayonet."

Nothing could be further from the truth, as anyone who reads these pages may discover for himself. The Japanese love the *arme blanche*, and never hesitate to use it. With the bayonet they have proved themselves again and again to be most dangerous foemen, whether singly or *en masse*. Before Liao-yang a whole division charged and carried a position at the point of the bayonet and never fired a shot. At the Sha-ho bayonet charges were almost hourly incidents, and demonstrated the fallacy, born in South Africa, that entrenched positions are unassailable save by powder and shot. The Japanese recognise no "lethal zone swept by a horizontal sheet of lead" within four hundred yards of an entrenched enemy. They found this the zone of comparative safety from rifle fire, and went in with the bayonet.

"The Japanese make frontal attacks without attempting turning movements."

This certainly has not been characteristic of the operations in Manchuria. Wide flanking movements have been the distinguishing feature in Japanese tactics

as well as in their strategy. It is true that at the battle of the Yalu they claimed to have won the victory by direct frontal attack, yet it cannot be denied that the flanking movement in the mountains on the east was the immediate cause of the Russian retirement.

"The Japanese do not like night attacks and night marches."

Night attacks and night marches are always difficult and hazardous, and are not "liked" by any army, but the Japanese have never shown any reluctance to use the cover of night. From the Yalu to the Sha-ho the campaign has been remarkable for the number of night marches and night attacks, some of which, according to Japanese staff officers, have been on a scale never before attempted.

I have given now a general idea of the fighting capacities of the rival forces as they appeared to one another. Those who are interested in technical details will do well to study the appendices. Enough, however, has been said in these chapters to enable the reader to follow with some insight the narrative of the active campaign.

Chapter IV

THE PLAN OF CAMPAIGN AND THE JAPANESE LEADERS.

A GLANCE at the map will show that the Russian defence lay within an irregular triangle, of which Harbin is the apex, and Port Arthur and Vladivostock are the angles at the base. The railway from Harbin to Port Arthur passes through several towns, like Mukden, Liao-yang and Hai-cheng, upon which the Russians could concentrate rapidly, but south of Hai-cheng the line runs along the coast, and is open to flank attack from the sea.

From Harbin to Vladivostock the line of defence may be said roughly to traverse Kirwin and to sweep Eastward to the coast. On the land side Vladivostock is defended by the difficult nature of the country and by the river Toumen, which covers its approach from the South-west. So isolated, however, is this fortress that its capture was an incident that did not enter into the first phase of the campaign.

The base of the triangle from the mouth of the Yalu to the Toumen is the strongest line of defence, and was the first to be assailed. The Yalu forms a natural barrier along the north of Korea. Winding its tortuous length between high and rugged mountains it receives as

affluents many torrents and impetuous streams. A few miles from the point where its waters mingle with the ocean, the banks of the Yalu descend into the plain. Upon this lower ground on the left of the river is the town of Wiju, and on the right nearer to the bay stands Antung. At Wiju you may cross the Yalu ; it is the key to the barrier of mountain and flood that divides the hermit kingdom from Manchuria.

To force the passage of the river by direct assault would have been to risk disaster at the outset. It was necessary to make a diversion in order to turn the position and compel the Russians to fall back along the road to Liao-yang. Such a movement required great skill and secrecy. In 1894 the Japanese effected a landing near the mouth of the river and on the right bank, so as to envelop Antung and Wiju from the North.

With a view to mislead the enemy General Kuroki made a demonstration in front of Antung, where the Russians awaited attack, while he pushed his flanking movement through the almost inaccessible mountains on the East.

When the Japanese crossed the Yalu, their real difficulties began. The country South of Mukden is a sea of mountains, and there was always in the mind of General Kuroki's staff the fear that General Kuropatkin would detach a large force from the Peninsula and succeed in isolating the Japanese army in Manchuria. To guard against that danger troops were landed at Takushan, West of Antung, and formed a new *point d'appui*, from

which a strong flank was pushed steadily toward the narrow peninsula. The purpose of this movement was not merely to protect General Kuroki's army, but to cover the army that was about to land in the Liao-tung Peninsula. Here again the Russians were taken by surprise. They expected a descent upon Nieuchang, on the West coast of the Gulf, which seemed an ideal point from which to threaten Liao-yang through Hai-cheng, to cut off Port Arthur, and to turn the position. But again the Japanese adopted the strategy of the Chinese War, and despite the report of its impregnable strength, forced a landing at Kin-chou at the neck of the Kwanlung Peninsula.

From this point the Japanese plan of campaign, if it did not actually miscarry, was at any rate tardy in development. It was not anticipated that Port Arthur would be capable of prolonged defence. Recalling their experience with the Chinese in 1884, the Japanese felt certain that the fortress would be captured in a few weeks, and that General Nogi's army would move North into line with General Kuroki. Had they foreseen that several months would be spent in difficult and costly siege operations, they would have been content with investing Port Arthur, clearing the peninsula, and joining their forces for an immediate attack on Liao-yang.

The task of driving the Russians North was given to the Third Army, with whose advent in the peninsula began the active campaign on land under the direction of Field Marshal Oyama and the Head Quarter Staff.

The Liao-tung Peninsula was rapidly cleared, and the Russians were driven back upon their main defences at Liao-yang, leaving Port Arthur to its fate.

The men who were responsible for this plan of campaign were the members of the Imperial and Head-quarter Staffs. In the Marquis Yamagata, who remained in Tokyo with the Emperor, was vested almost absolute power. He is a man of remarkable character and ability, and is regarded as the creator of the national army out of bands of feudal retainers. With him was associated as Assistant Chief of the Staff, General Nagaoka, whose acquaintance with Europe, and especially with France, made him an able coadjutor. In the Minister for War—General Terauchi, himself a soldier of repute and experience, the Imperial Staff had another invaluable assistant.

The direction of operations in the field was vested in Field Marshal the Marquis Oyama—a soldier of wide experience and attractive personality, in whose character is a strange mixture of caution and reckless daring. I have observed in the constitution of every Japanese Staff a remarkable combination of character and experience. It will be found almost invariably that the Commander is a man of mature years, distinguished for caution—a soldier with no European training, and speaking no language save Japanese—and that with him is associated as Chief of the Staff a younger and more active man of more rapid cerebration and greater daring—a soldier who has had experience in Europe. This combination works

admirably, the Commander acting as a brake and the Chief of the Staff as a propeller.

General Kodama, Chief of Marquis Oyama's staff, is a most interesting personality, and is popularly regarded as the brain of the army. He comes of a fighting race, having been born half a century ago in the province of Choshu, one of the four great Daimiates that have given an unbroken succession of warriors and rulers to Japan. The Marquis Ito, the most famous of modern statesmen, Count Inouye, ablest of administrators and diplomatists, and Field Marshal Yamagata are from Choshu. Indeed, there is only one other clan that has the heritage of power. If you are not of Satsuma you must be of Choshu. Hence the term "Sat-Cho," familiar in politics to denote the combination of these great Daimiates. The province in which General Kodama was born played a foremost part in the revolution that overthrew the Shogun and restored the authority of the Mikado. His clansmen were the first to cast aside armour and sword and spear, nnd to adopt the arms, discipline, and tactics of Europe. Baron Kodama was sixteen years old when Japan began to throw off her feudal chains, and the revolution swept him into the forces arrainged against feudalism.

In 1871 feudalism was dead. Shogun and Daimios were driven into private life and the Emperor was released from enforced seclusion at Kioto. But the seeds of disaffection remained, and in 1874 rebellion broke out in the province of Hizen, one of the Daimiates that had combined to destroy the Shogun.

Kodama was a captain, having received his company twelve months before, and was sent with the Osaka division to Saga, as adjutant. The rebellion was suppressed in ten days, yet it lasted long enough to display the courage and determination of the yeung soldier. With a bullet through each arm he continued to pursue the rebels until help came and the rout was complete. On his return to the capital he was promoted to the rank of major and received the thanks of the Emperor. His services were in demand three years later when civil war again ravaged the country. Major Kodama was with the Imperial troops besieged in the castle of Kumamoto by the rebels of Satsuma. The garrison suffered terrible privations and was relieved with great difficulty. As soon as the siege was raised Kodama took the field once more and fought several battles. In 1889 he was gazetted major-general and in the following year was sent to Europe to study the military systems of the western nations. During the war with China he held the important appointment of Vice Minister of War. In 1900 he was appointed Govenor General of the Island of Formosa, a post which he retains although in 1903 he was summoned to Tokyo to take the portfolio of Home Secretary.

When Baron Kodama—he was raised to the peerage in 1895 with a step in rank as lieutenant-general—became a member of the Cabinet there was a universal cry for bold administration, and the hopes of reformers centered on the soldier-statesman to whom

they had given the name "Minister of the Axe" because of his declaration that in politics as in battle a sharp axe is better than a blunt knife.

The encroachments of Russia in Manchuria and Korea turned Kodama's energies and thoughts from politics to war, and in October of 1903, when Major-General Tamura died, he left the Cabinet to discharge the duties of assistant chief of the Head Quarter Staff, a post to which he was called not only by the voice of the people but by his comrades in arms. In this responsible and difficult position, the General has given proof of foresight and perseverance that have distinguished him throughout his career. He is a man of strong character and possesses in no small degree the indefinable quality known as personal magnetism. As a staff officer his clear head, his sound and ready judgment and his mastery of detail have been of the highest service. He has the infinite capacity for taking pains which Michael Angelo called genius. Night and day he sits at his desk attending to the multitudinous details of a great war, yet his door is never closed to a friend or even to the stranger who has any claim upon his attention.

Captain Tanaka, the baron's aide-de-camp, is a typical example of the new school. His knowledge of England is not confined to the language ; it extends to our military history in its obscurest details, and his spare moments are spent in translating into Japanese the tactical books of our army.

General Fukushima, Director of Military Intelligence, is a much-travelled soldier and speaks English. He journeyed alone through Siberia in 1892, and brought back valuable reports that confirmed the high opinion of his special talent. At that time he was only a lieutenant-colonel, and his fame had not gone beyond a small official circle. When he returned from Siberia he was appointed to the Staff and was sent on a mission of investigation to China, Korea, and Russia. During the Chinese war he commanded a regiment, and was afterwards made Governor of Formosa, but resigned the post in consequence of some difference of opinion on the subject of the pigtail of the nationalized Chinese. Once more he took the road, and journeyed through India, Persia, and Turkey, with eyes that saw everything, ears that heard everything, and a memory that forgot nothing. In the Boxer troubles General Fukushima was in command of the Japanese contingent that took part in the Tientsin-Pekin operations, when the Japanese troops distinguished themselves for reckless courage and perfect discipline.

The first general to take the field was General Kuroki. Born in the province of Satsuma sixty-one years ago, Baron Kuroki springs from the warrior class and was trained from infancy in the lessons of endurance, courage, and chivalry. In the revolution he fought for the Emperor against the Shogun, who had usurped all save the name of Mikado. He received his company in 1871, and six years later, as lieutenant-

colonel, marched to the relief of Kumamoto Castle, where General Kodama and the Imperial troops were beseiged by rebellious members of his own Satsuma clan. As soon as this civil war was over he joined the Staff, and was promoted to the rank of major-general in 1885. In the early stages of the war with China, General Kuroki was engaged in the work of mobilisation, but when the struggle developed he was despatched to the front with the rank of lieutenant-general, and commanded one of the divisions that took Wei-hai-wei after a desperate resistance by the Chinese.

Like all brave leaders, General Kuroki is greatly beloved by his men.

General Fujii, Chief of the Staff of the First Army, is one of the most able and popular officers in the army. He entered the service as a cadet and is now only forty-three years of age. Leaving Germany, where he was military *attaché* for four years, he joined the Staff of Field-Marshal Oyama during the Chinese War, and fought at Port Arthur and Wei-hai-wei. After acting as instructor in the Staff College he returned to Europe as *attaché* in Vienna, and came back to Japan to be chief instructor in the Staff College. Immediately before the war he made an adventurous journey through Korea, and gained much knowledge of the country that was of service to the army.

It was my good fortune to have the friendship of General Fujii and to have profited greatly by his experience and counsel, of which many indications may

be found in this volume. He is a man of ready sympathy and phenomenal powers of work. Full of resource and daring, he possesses, in an astonishing measure, that concentration and detachment of mind which is found only in men of the highest capacity. I recall one example. During a battle General Fujii sent for me and laughingly complained that I never ventured near him. I replied that I would not dream of approaching him at so critical a time. "When you see me smoking a cigar you may know that I am ready to talk with you on any subject you like." As the general was always smoking I had no scruples in the future, though, lest the stock of cigars should fail, it was my habit to present him with a few cigars before the fighting began.

When I look back and endeavour to form an estimate of the character of those who direct the Japanese army, I am bound to confess that no country in the world can boast of men more endowed by nature and better equipped by training for the desperate service of war. Their energy and industry are not less remarkable than their ability and devotion to duty. When a man falls short of this high standard—and there have been a few such men—he disappears and not a protest is heard. No one in Japan would propose to make Field Marshals of their failures.

Chapter V

THE LANDING IN KOREA.

It was of supreme importance that Pyng-yang should be occupied without delay. Once in the possession of that city the Japanese could command three points for the landing of troops in Korea-Fusan, on the South-East, Chemulpo on the West, twenty-six miles from the capital, and Chinampo, whence Pyng-yang, forty miles distant, could be reached by road and river. Moreover, it was desirable to avoid a contest, for Pyng-yang, as the Japanese found in 1894, is not easy to attack from the South. But caution, as well as speed and secrecy, was necessary. Though the diplomatic rupture was complete, hostilities had not begun, and the command of the sea was undetermined.

Fusan was secure as long as the Japanese fleet controlled the Korean Strait; as a port, it had many drawbacks. Facilities for landing were poor. Only a few miles of railway had been laid, and the distance from Seoul was two hundred and sixty-seven miles. Sounchen, in the Gulf of Tai-kang, between Fusan and Mokpo, was more convenient, and arrangements were made to disembark troops at that port. Roads were constructed, relay stations and supply depots were established, and it was calculated that the capital could be

reached by the first days of April. Thus, while neglecting no preparation in the South, the Japanese kept their eyes and hopes fixed on the Northern ports, and were ready to seize the first opening.

The First Army was mobilised on February the 6th. Twenty-four hours later some men of the Twelfth Division landed at Chemulpo and entered Seoul without opposition. Transports arrived on the 8th, and landed troops in the presence of two Russian warships. Next day, Admiral Urui, who commanded the escorting squadron, carried out his orders which were to destroy the Russian cruisers and to secure the landing of the army at Chemulpo. The Varyag, a first-class cruiser, the Korietz, a third-class cruiser, and the transport Sungari were sunk in the harbour, and the port and capital of Korea were in the hands of the Japanese. This swift and unexpected blow was followed by a naval victory at Port Arthur, which advanced the campaign by one month.

In seven days Japan had won control of the Korean Gulf. Fusan was no longer needed as a base, and the weary march of two hundred and sixty miles from Sounchen was avoided. Troops began to debark at Chemulpo without let or hinderance save such as arose from the absence of landing facilities. Small boats were few, and wharfage and shore accommodation were wanting. The result was that transports were delayed two or three days, and that part of the Fourteenth Regiment, which reached the mouth of the Salee river on the 18th of

February, did not land until the 21st. One company of this regiment was already hurrying towards Pyng-yang, conscious of the importance of the mission with which it was entrusted. Landed at Chemulpo on the 6th, this company advanced by forced marches and reached Pyng-yang not a moment too soon, for the Russian cavalry were fifteen miles North, and on the 28th a troop of Cossacks appeared at the North gate of the city. Here the first shots on land were exchanged, and the Russians retired.

Pyng-yang is situated on the river Tai-tong, about sixty miles from the coast, and is the capital of the province. Long before the Christian era it was the seat of Government, and remained the centre of royal authority until the tenth century, when the turbulence of the people and repeated assaults by the Chinese drove the Court to Seoul. It is a collection of mean and squalid houses, the number of which is estimated at three hundred thousand. Beyond the ancient walls, which have withstood many a savage raid, dwells a large and scattered population, who cultivate the great plain that extends to the foot of the hill on which the city is built. From a military point of view Pyng-yang is of great importance. Standing on the Great Mandarin road, along which tribute was borne to Pekin, it commands the approach to Seoul, which is one hundred and seventy-six miles distant, to Gensan, an open port on the north-east coast, and to Chinampo, twenty miles from the mouth of the Tai-tong, the natural base of

supplies where the Japanese landed their stores during the Chinese War in 1894.

Had the Russians realised the importance that the Japanese attached to the immediate and unopposed occupation of Pyng-yang they would surely have made some effort to delay the advance of this small force. They knew, of course, that it would give their enemy a strategic position and would provide them with a base at Chinampo—a few days march from the Yalu. But they did not forsee what use the Japanese would make of the coast North of the Tai-tong River, and what a disastrous effect this would have in their first encounter.

The duty assigned to General Kuroki's army was to march North as quickly as possible, to discover the enemy and to give him battle. With Pyng-yang in his possession, the task was less difficult than it had appeared at the beginning of February. But many obstacles had to be overcome and many problems solved before the army could advance with safety and a definite purpose. Having no certain knowledge of the strength and intentions of the enemy, General Kuroki had to make plans for every contingency. He was aware that the Russians were entrenched on the North bank of the Yalu, yet he was by no means sure that they would not oppose him somewhere South of the river.

General Michtchenko's movements darkened the councils of the Japanese who were disposed to ascribe to them an intelligent purpose. When the Russian leader came to Syen-chen in a four-wheeled carriage he had

with him 2,500 Cossacks and one battery of Field Artillery. With this force he occupied Anju, an important town on the Mandarin road, about thirty miles North of Pyng-yang. His next step was to send Korean spies to discover the movements of the enemy. Now the Korean looked upon the Russian as an unwelcome guest who occupied his house, ate his food, frightened away his women, and left him at the mercy of agents and interpreters to whose dirty palms stuck the roubles paid in compensation. His one ambition was to get rid of these visitors. Spies accordingly returned with reports that the Japanese were coming in great force from three directions. These stories had the effect they were intended to produce, and the Cossacks retired North with artillery and transport, destroying the telegraph wires and encouraging the natives to use the poles for fuel.

The constitution of General Michtchenko's force was another cause of perplexity. It was not easy to understand why a cavalry brigade should come as far South as Syen-chen into difficult mountainous country. If the object was to delay the advance of the Japanese, the cavalry would have been accompanied by a considerable force of infantry. On the other hand, if the purpose was merely to discover as quickly as possible the approach of the enemy, spies could have brought the information. Some deep laid scheme must lie hidden behind this mysterious cavalry screen. Thus argued the Japanese who were slow to admit so obvious

a tactical error on the part of their adversary. As a matter of fact, General Michtchenko had no great scheme. He was simply committing an elementary mistake which he emphasised by retiring along the main road where he had no opportunity of using his cavalry to ascertain the strength and direction of the Japanese advance.

Chapter VI

THE NORTHERN ADVANCE.

General Kuroki and his staff arrived at Pyng-yang on March 21st, and began to prepare for the advance. Four problems had first to be solved. At what point were the Russians likely to offer serious resistance? Along what road must the Japanese march? How were three divisions to be supplied with food and ammunition? Was it possible to transport heavy artillery to the Yalu? Without precise information as to the enemy's plans the first question could not be answered. It was known, of course, that the Russians had an entrenched position North of the Yalu, but of their strength beyond Pyng-yang General Kuroki was ignorant. Spies reported that the enemy had not bridged the river, but were able to cross the ice West of Wiju by means of planks and straw. There was, consequently, nothing to prevent the Russians from appearing in force South of the Yalu before the Japanese army could be concentrated at a point near the river.

General Kuroki had to take precautions against this contingency. Reconnaissances showed that the Cossacks were hovering about the river which flows through Anju, but whether with artillery and infantry

could not be ascertained. Uncertain of what lay behind this cavalry screen, General Kuroki prepared to fight in the course of his advance on the river.

Anju accordingly became the next objective. The Second Division had landed at the mouth of the Tai-tong river on March 16th, and before the 21st the greater part of the Twelfth Division had marched from Seoul to Ping.yang. The advance was begun a few days later, and was made in this order. The three divisions formed a line about thirty miles north of Ping-yang, stretching from Syunchong on the East through Sukchon on the main road and onward towards the coast. On the right, near Syunchong, was the Twelfth Division : in the centre, at Sukchon, was the Guards Division, and on the left was the Second Division.

As the troops moved rapidly Northward their difficulties increased. Despite the labours of an army of sappers the roads were in a terrible state. The surface, frozen to a depth of twelve inches, began to melt, and man and horse plunged through morass and quagmire. At Pyng-yang it was comparatively easy to feed three divisions because of the river, but the task grew heavier with every mile, for transport trains that were intended to cover six ri a day could often march only two ri. Native coolies were engaged in tens of thousands, yet even these did not suffice, and the army must have suffered serious privations had it not been that Korea, unlike Manchuria, produces large quantities of rice and that the people were willing to sell.

At Anju it was apparent that the Russians did not intend to oppose the advance South of the Yalu. General Kuroki accordingly halted to collect supplies at that place and to complete his plans. Assuming that no battle would be fought until the Yalu was reached, the army must march seven days and each division must have twenty-one days supplies of food and ammunition. It was calculated that at least four weeks stores must be collected at Anju before the advance could begin. Fortunately it was possible now to send ships from Chinampo to the mouth of the river Tching-chien, so that Anju was provisioned more quickly than the Japanese had anticipated.

From Anju General Kuroki had choice of two roads. He might march along the Mandarin road that runs direct to Wiju, or he might take the Eastern road which passes through Yunsan and reaches the Yalu at Chosan. Natives declared that field guns and wheeled transport could not move along the Eastern road, whereas if the Mandarin road was repaired in certain places the passage of guns and carts was practicable. In one respect, at least, there was no uncertainty. No sooner would the army begin to march along one road than it would regret that it had not chosen the other. But there were considerations more important than those of ease. It was imperative that the force should be on the same road that the main body of the enemy would select if by any chance the Russians made up their minds to come South of the Yalu. As far as

that river the Mandarin road was undoubtedly the better, but beyond the Yalu the Eastern road was good and would be more convenient in the event of the Japanese having to turn the intrenched position at Chiu-lien-cheng or to march directly on Liao-yang. To divide the army and send it by both roads would facilitate transport, but in the face of a strong and enterprising foe this would be dangerous tactics, for there were no lateral communications or cross-roads.

The Japanese Staff decided to make use of both roads. A mixed brigade was sent by the Eastern route through Yunsan, while the main body of two and a half divisions advanced along the Mandarin road. Once more arose the serious question of supplying with food and ammunition this great force on the march. The stores accumulated at Anju would not suffice, as they could not be sent forward quickly enough. It was necessary to discover another sea base further North. To make wide reconnaisances was not easy, seeing that the enemy's cavalry were still South of the Yalu. But the Japanese had two strong incentives. Besides the question of food was that of the heavy artillery. At Chinampo were two batteries of 5-inch howitzers that must be carried to the Yalu with speed and secrecy. To transport them by the main road, even if practicable, would be to disclose their presence to the Russians, who were confident that nothing heavier than field guns could be brought to the Yalu.

Volunteers were not wanting to undertake this dangerous enterprise. Officers of the navy and army put off in small boats under cover of night, and searched every mile of the coast and of the tracks leading therefrom. The peninsula of South-West of Charenkwan was deemed the best place, and General Kuroki decided to send a force sufficient to cover the landing of guns and and supplies at Richao. A large number of men would be needed should the Russians discover the secret and descend into the peninsula. But again rose the problem of feeding a detached body of troops, whose sea communications were dependent on the weather and on the absence of a Russian squadron. After careful calculation General Kuroki came to the conclusion that he could not send more than two regiments of cavalry and one regiment of infantry. This force accordingly marched North and came to Chonju on March 28th. General Michtchenko four days earlier had received a message reproaching him for having allowed Pyng-yang to be occupied by a single company of Japanese infantry, and commanding him to do something to check the rapid advance of the enemy. He accordingly went South with six hundred Cossacks, and encountered the Japanese detached force under the walls of Chonju.

The Russians attacked Chonju from three sides, and were opposed at first by only a few soldiers who had been left to hold the town. Hearing shots some cavalry of the Guard that had ridden North returned with all speed, and messengers were despatched to warn

the main body. Hard pressed, and almost surrounded, the Japanese held a position South of Chonju, until reinforced by infantry from main detachment, who arrived breathless after a race of three miles. Seizing elevations on the East and South-east the infantry opened fire, and drove back the Cossacks, who fell back upon Charenkwan.

This little victory secured for the Japanese a fresh landing place. Roads, however, must be made before howitzers and carts could be moved inland. This was a work of tremendous difficulty, for the whole countryside was a fathomless bog. Yet the engineers of the Second Division were equal to the task, despite the fact that for twenty days they had been making every foot of the road along which the division marched from Chinampo. From Richao, where the howitzers were put on shore, to the main road at Charenkwan is a distance of fifteen miles—fifteen miles of rice fields and morass. Pine trees were cut from the hills and sunk in the mire until a foundation could be secured for branches and brush wood, which in turn were covered with earth. In nine days a path was made from the sea, and the pioneers of the Second Division had the satisfaction of knowing that if heavy artillery failed the Japanese as it did in the Chinese War it would not be for the same reason.

Chapter VII

EN ROUTE FOR THE FRONT.

In Japan you must take the advice of St. Paul and follow after patience. No country teaches the lesson so thoroughly. In Tokyo the patience of hope gave place to the patience of despair, yet we had promise of recompense. Captain Tanaka, the genial and inscrutable aide-de-camp of General Kodama, wrote to me these words: "The men of great patience will, I think, be crowned with an invaluable reward and unfathomable blessing by Heaven!" I was beginning to doubt if I should live long enough to wear that crown when the order came to march. Whither we were not told and did not stop to inquire, for Japanese generals, like soldiers of other countries, love to clothe in mystery their most obvious movements and prefer always to "drink tea by strategy." It was enough that we were to proceed to Chemulpo and there await further commands.

From Chemulpo we were ordered at once to Chianampo in the transport Suminoye Maru. At dawn on April 10th we approached the mouth of the Salee river and saw before us a glorious panorama of sea and shore. Gleaming like a sheet of steel the channel

stretched away in the grey distance studded with brown bosses of islet and rock, like a huge buckler slung before the harbour.

On the afternoon of April 12th, I left Chianampo with my interpreter, Mr. Ito, and proceeded to Pyng-yang where orders awaited us. Weather and hard usage had wiped out every trace of a track, and when my restive Chinese pony was not wallowing in mire he was doing a tight rope performance on a few inches of crumbling earth over the slimy depths of a paddy field. After many hours we came to Ayshin, a squalid hamlet of wattle walls in which lived and died the famous Chinese classic Kwantaishi, whose essays are known to every scholar in the East.

Yongan was my resting place for the night. Here I was received by the pay-master of a regiment of the Guards—a banker and former member of the Japanese Parliament, who had quartered himself in the gaol, which was certainly cleaner than any house in the village. Next morning my host presented me with two sticks used for punishing criminals. They are of hard wood about an inch square, inscribed with Chinese characters denoting the number of strokes under which the unhappy offender often dies. I resumed my journey under dismal conditions, for rain had fallen in the night and a dense fog overhung the castle on the hill in which Kato and the early Japanese invaders of Korea were besieged and reduced to such straits that they ate the mud walls.

In comfortable Quarters.

My Interpreter and Staff.

[*facing p.* 44

For ten miles I waded through a quagmire, and my horse was mired to the girths. Rain was still falling when I entered Kang-sye, a foul village reeking with ages of filth. Our meal of rice that evening was supplemented by two small birds, shot by an intelligent sergeant, who also presented to me a manuscript copy of the Korean laws, and two volumes of the history of Korea. Next morning the native Governor arrived to pay his respects to the colonel in command of the depot. He was an old man with the white beard of which Koreans are proud. His top-knot was concealed under a black net of horse-hair, over which was a white hat, shaped like an up-turned flower pot on a round table. This strange head-gear is made of bamboo, split to a fineness of a silk thread, and is the most distinctive feature in a Korean scene. Under his loose white robe the Governor wore a sleeveless waistcoat of purple. His dignity, and not his feebleness, required the support of two retainers, who held the magistrate under his arms as he stepped into the colonel's room and squatted on the matted floor. He had complaint to make of rice stolen, women frightened, and shrines desecrated by the stalling of horses. The colonel explained that offences of this kind were severely punished, but that misunderstandings must arise owing to the difference in language. He urged the Governor to encourage the people to return to their homes as seed time was drawing near, and impressed on him the urgency of repairing the roads.

From Kang-sye to Pyng-yang the journey was

easy. The rain had ceased, and the road was comparatively hard. Between the coast and the city is an unbroken succession of mountains and valleys. The slopes of the hills are cultivated, and the flats are paddy fields. The soil is fertile, but the cultivation is primitive, and the people are indolent. Rice, which is the staple food, is grown everywhere in great quantities, and on every hand are fields of maize, barley and millet. The Koreans are meat eaters, and breed immense herds of cattle, most of which had been driven into the mountains in order to keep the soldiers out of temptation. The ox is the common beast of burden, and near Ping-yang I saw long lines of them laden with packs. They are fine animals, much larger than the Japanese oxen, and are hardy and tractable. We approached the city across a broad plain, which stretches South-east to a distance of thirty miles. On the North and West are wooded heights that reach within two or three miles of the walls. Round the city proper is a wall of irregular shape, from six to seven miles in circumference. The Eastern wall is thirty feet high, surmounted by a crenelated parapet, and rises sheer from the bank of the river Tai-tong, which is two hundred yards broad and twenty feet deep at this point. On the South is the old city, surrounded by an earth wall, from ten to fifteen feet high, broken down in many places, and embracing an area of three miles by two.

Entering through a broad gate guarded by Japanese sentries we traversed street after street of thatched

houses and shops crowded with soldiers and Koreans, who appeared to be doing a brisk trade in the common necessities of life. The smells and abominations of the city are surpassed—in my experience—only by those of Jerusalem. There is one clean spot, and that is the American Mission, which is doing excellent work, and reports most favourably on the intelligence of the youth of the country, their eagerness to learn, and their capacity for developing domestic virtues. The Koreans are commonly supposed to have no religion except a complicated system of ancestor worship. This is an error, for they also worship demons, and are full of strange superstitions. Walking at night through one of the main streets—which in the darkness I mistook for a sewer—my attention was arrested by the tinkling of a bell, accompanied by a droning chant. Mr. Graham Lee, an American missionary, guided me to a group of natives squatted at the door of a house. In the middle of the throng sat a blind man tinkling a tiny brass bell with a shell, and muttering an incantation over a bowl of rice, some pickles, and three small cups of native spirit. He was exorcising the devil that had entered a man who lay sick in the house, and the food and drink were to tempt the evil spirit out of doors. The duty of exorcist is the special province of the blind, who are the wizards of the land.

I remained in Pyng-yang no longer than was necessary to secure a permit to travel North, and to change some Japanese notes for the current coin. Owing

to the issue of nickles, the intrinsic value of which is only one-eighteenth of their face value—without gold or silver to redeem them—the number of counterfeit coins is enormous. Spurious money is imported in large quantities from Japan, and permission to coin nickles is freely granted to private individuals who can pay for the privilege of robbing their neighbours. The only medium of exchange is the half yang, of which twenty make one shilling, so that the bulk and weight of even a few days' expenditure are serious considerations for the traveller. Cash, circular pieces of brass with a square hole, are also in circulation.

At Syunan—a typical hamlet of mud walls and thatched roofs—I was assigned to quarters in the house of a wealthy native who owns the country-side. His abode differed only in size from that of his poorest neighbour, for a corrupt government and official exactions not merely destroy incentive to industry and enterprise but create a semblance of indigence among the well-to-do who wish to retain their property. Four mud walls and a mud floor, not over clean, gave me shelter, and I shivered all night in my fur coat, for I travelled with nothing more than my saddle bags in order that my progress might not be impeded. To my ration of rice and beef the owner of the house added some ducks' eggs and an infusion of wheat—the native substitute for tea.

On the way to Anju next day I passed miles of transport. The road was white with Koreans laden with

rice packed in straw for the Japanese army. The coolie is strong and capable of much endurance. He will walk—as I afterwards discovered—fifty miles a day for a week or more ; but he is unreliable, improvident, and incorrigibly lazy. He carries his load on a small wooden frame called a "chikai," fastened to the shoulders with straw-padded loops. His ordinary burden is eighty pounds, and a day's march is sixty li or twenty miles. The Japanese hired them of headmen, and paid by distance and load, so that they secured a cheap and ready transport in a country where wheeled traffic is almost unknown. They also made use of oxen, donkeys, and ponies. The Korean pony is very hardy, stands from eleven to thirteen hands, and can carry from 150 to 200 lbs. thirty miles a day. His feed is a hot mash, and he is not allowed to drink cold water. His nostrils are slit to make him long winded, and on the whole he is a very serviceable little beast, though his morals are those of the poultry yard, and his vices are legion.

At dusk we were still winding our weary way over mountains, through passes and across valleys. Anju seemed a myth, but at night we entered the city and were hospitably received by the Japanese. It is a town of some importance, and stands on an eminence surrounded by a wall built for defence against incursions from the North. The streets are narrow and foul, and the hovels were crowded to overflowing with soldiers on their way to the front. In the early morning I left Anju, and crossing a broad river rode over a sandy plain

that was at one time the bed of a torrent. A few miles of broken country brought me to another water course which, like most of the rivers of Korea, is shallow and channelless. The Japanese had bridged this river, but in order to avoid a long diversion I passed over in a ferry boat or lighter. By way of Kasan I reached Tyon-ju on the 17th of April, having to travel through very wild country and to walk eighteen miles, dragging behind me a very weary horse. It was close upon midnight when I presented myself at the depot, only to find the officer in command too much occupied with a gift of oxen from the King of Korea to give heed to the "European gentleman" who came hungry and footsore.

At Syen-chen, where I haltered next night, I had a delightful welcome from the American Mission, of which Dr. Sharrocks is the head. Head-quarters of the army were at Sharenkwan—a short day's march—and on the 19th of April Mr. McKenzie of the *Daily Mail* (who had overtaken me at Tyon-ju, where I was detained by a slight accident through miscalculating the height of a Korean door) and I were presented to General Fujii, Chief of the Staff. We were just in time, for head-quarters moved next day to Hiken-min-jori, and on the following morning to the vicinity of Wiju, where we found the army preparing to force the passage of the Yalu.

Chapter VIII

THE VALLEY OF THE YALU.

BETWEEN China and Korea nature has thrown a barrier of mountain and river that looks impregnable. Behind this defence the Russians decided to make their first stand. The Yalu is the longest river in Korea, and has its source on the Southern slopes of Chang-poi-Chang. Its upper reaches traverse an almost inaccessible region of forest and mountain, but from its junction with the Eastern Hun river the valley is cultivated. From the Manchurian side the Yalu receives several tributaries that descend from the Ever White Mountains, making it in spring and autumn a turbulent flood. After a sinuous course of three hundred and twenty miles like the writhing of a dragon, the Yalu, swollen by the waters of the Ai-ho, empties itself into the Yellow Sea.

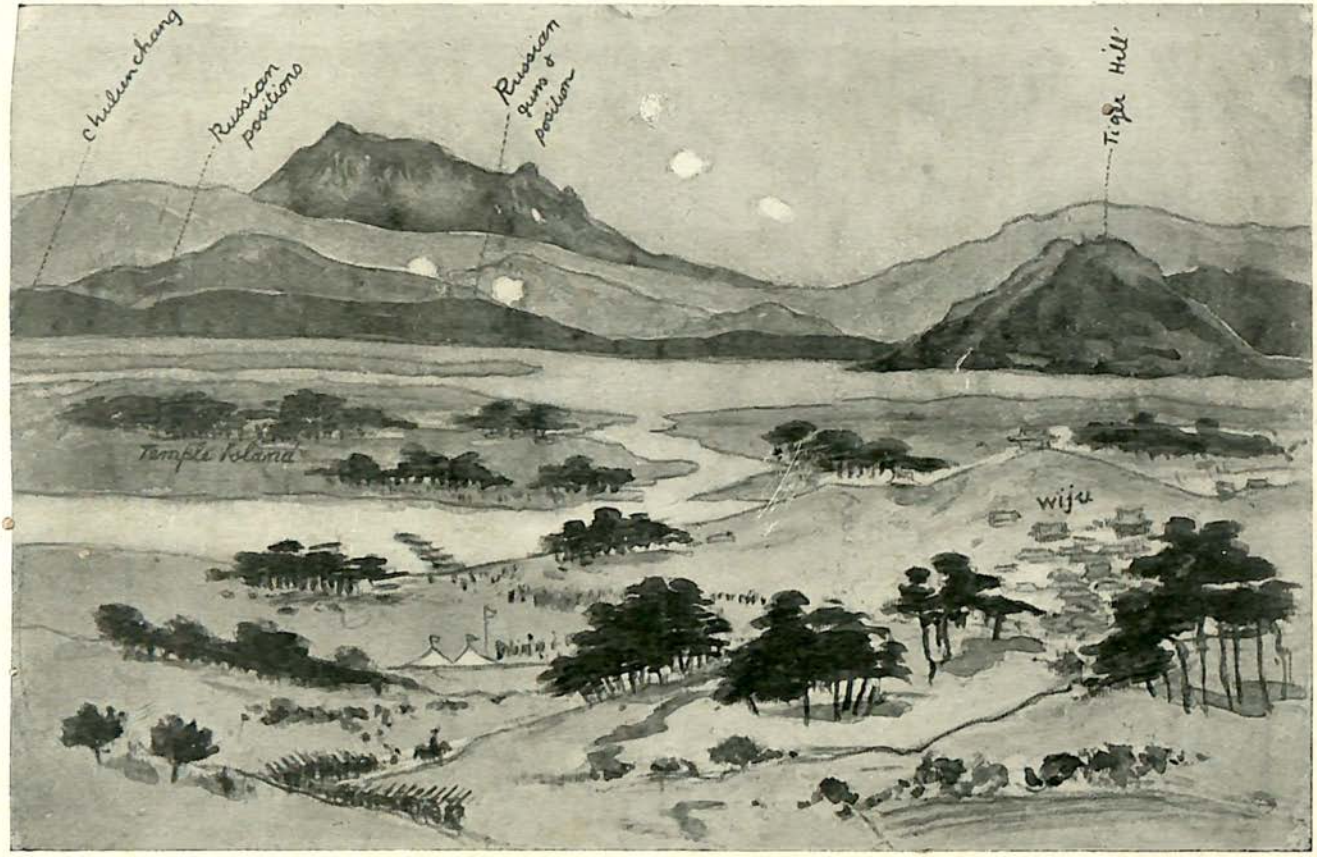
Wiju is situated about two miles South of the main stream of the Yalu, in the hollow of the hills over which runs a wall of light stone. A steep ridge separates the city from its port on the river, which is navigable as far as Tchang-cheng, a noted trading place sixty miles from the sea. The population of Wiju—"the stronghold of the West"—in ordinary times is twelve thousand, exclusive of one thousand Korean soldiers,

whose chief business was to scrutinise all persons entering or leaving the Hermit Kingdom by the Mandarin road which passes through the city.

Screened by cavalry whose lines stretched from Yongampo, near the mouth of the Yalu, through Wiju to a point some miles East of Suikochin on the upper stream, the Japanese infantry pressed forward toward the scene of their first battle. The Guards marched along the main road and were the first to enter Wiju. The Second Division came up on the West, while the Twelfth Division, armed with mountain guns, and composed of expert hill-fighters, continued to traverse the mountainous country on the East. On April 21st the concentration was completed.

Almost every foot of the way was made under difficulties. So bad were the roads that the passage of one field gun rendered it necessary for the artillery to halt and repair the path for the next gun. Infantry as well as pioneers were employed in constructing roads from the Peninsula of Tyolsan. In some places the ground was very rocky, and involved much labour. Elsewhere morass and paddy field had to be spanned with timber. There are few districts in Korea that have not been denuded of forest, and wood is scarce. Fortunately, to the South of Wiju is an Imperial preserve known as White Horse Hill, the slopes of which gave a plentiful supply of timber.

When General Kuroki and his Staff arrived at Wiju and surveyed the valley of the Yalu from the temple on



General View of the Russian Positions on the North Bank of the Yalu.

(From a Japanese water colour sketch.)

[*facing p.* 52

the North of the city they were filled with foreboding. To cross that network of rivers and attack an enemy of unknown strength entrenched in the hills beyond was a hazardous enterprise. At first glance it seemed hopeless. Even on a clear day field glasses were required to see the white walls of Chiu-lien-cheng. From the Temple to Conical Hill, North of the village, where the Russians had their artillery position, was a distance of six thousand mètres, and between these points were five or six deep and swift streams that must be bridged.

A study of the river is essential to an understanding of the battle. Opposite Wiju the Yalu and the Ai-ho flow through a broad delta bounded on the North by a steep and rugged mountain range that descends West of Antung into small hills and cultivated flats. The rivers separate into several streams and form many islands over which are scattered tiny hamlets. Close to Wiju, between the Yalu and a branch of that river, lies the island of Kontonto, seamed with deep dongas in which Russian riflemen were concealed. North of Kontonto, beyond the main stream, is the island of Wozakto, West of which, between branches of the Yalu and the Ai-ho, rises Tiger Hill, a bold promontory three thousand mètres from Wiju. Enclosed by the same branch of the Ai-ho and the main stream of that river stretches another delta known as Chonchagtai, whereon the most conspicuous building is a temple surrounded by a red wall. West of this island

flows the main stream of the Ai-ho, which passes within one thousand mètres from Conical Hill before it approaches Chiu-lien-cheng. Near to the Korean shore the Yalu and another of its branches form the island of Nanzato. The South-west of the delta is opposite Antung, where the river is five hundred mètres wide and is deep enough to allow small coasting vessels to steam within three or four miles from the town. At the Northern extremity of the delta lies the island of Kulito. In considering the tactical possibilities of the river it is most important to keep in mind the fact that at Kulito the main stream of the Yalu runs along the Russian side, while near Wiju it flows along the Japanese side, making a sharp turn almost North and South and bending again toward the South-west.

Tiger Hill and the heights to the North between the main streams of the Yalu and the Ai-ho, stand next in tactical importance. Would these mountains admit of any big movement of troops? The experience of 1894 was of little value, seeing that in the Chinese War only one regiment crossed these mountains. At that time the Japanese were of opinion that the heights were useless for offensive purposes, since they were steep and rugged and had no paths running East and West. Natives declared that only men and pack ponies could traverse them, and that at one or two places alone could roads be made with extreme labour owing to the hardness of the rock. These difficulties, so far from deterring General Kuroki, were a strong incentive. If

these mountains were inaccessible then they were the very quarter from which to surprise the enemy and turn his flank.

How and at what points should the river be crossed? The solution of these problems depended on several factors that could be ascertained only by careful and extensive reconnaisances. In the Autumn of 1894, when the Japanese invaded Manchuria, the water was low and there was a ford near Suikochin. Now that the ice was melting in the mountains the river was deep. There was no ford and the Russians had taken away all the native boats. Seventy boats had been brought from Japan in the hope that they might be of service, but it was impossible to bring them up the river under the guns and rifles of the enemy. Many soldiers volunteered to swim the rivers, to cross on rafts and on inflated bladders. But General Kuroki would listen to none of these wild schemes, deeming them too hazardous before an enemy whose strength and purpose were unknown.

Before the rivers could be bridged it was necessary to make sure that the water was not rising, for there was always the danger that while the ice on the lower stream melted, the upper stream would remain frozen and that ice floes would descend and sweep away the bridges. Cavalry were accordingly employed to place hydrometers in various places and to note the rise or fall of the river. As the waters of the Yalu rose or fell so rose or fell the hopes of General Kuroki and his staff.

To reconnoitre the valley for battle was very difficult. All the rivers were wider, deeper and swifter than was expected. The main stream was four hundred and fifty mètres wide, and the smaller not less than one hundred mètres in width.

Koreans reported vaguely that near the enemy's main position the Ai-ho was fordable in two or three places where the water rose no higher than a man's chest. A shower of rain or the melting of ice on the upper stream would drown these fords. Moreover, the lives of men and the issues of war could not be committed to native rumours. Careful investigation must be made. But the Ai-ho flowed only one thousand mètres in front of the Russian position and two thousand mètres behind their outposts. Reconnaissance was therefore impracticable as long as the enemy remained in possession of the islands, of Tiger Hill and of the hills to the North. Cossacks also patrolled the country from Tiger Hill to Antung and Westward beyond the mouth of the Yalu as far as Takushan.

General Kuroki was of opinion that no fewer than twelve bridges were needed. Before their construction could be attempted every stream must be carefully examined for places where the water was shallowest, the river bed suitable for driving piles, and the distance between the banks shortest. It was essential that the Russians should be kept as long as possible in ignorance of the points at which the Japanese purposed bridging, or every yard of the valley was visible from their

Japanese Infantry fording the Yalu.

[*facing p.* 56

position and they had marked the ranges. To make many reconnaissances in any quarter would be to betray the probable position of a bridge and to offer it for a target to the enemy's artillery.

To transport men was difficult enough, but to pass heavy guns across the river in face of the enemy seemed impossible. Yet it must be done. The hills North and East of Chiu-lien-cheng were beyond the range of Japanese guns South of the main stream. Unless both field and heavy artillery could be carried across the Yalu they could not be used with effect. It was hazardous to carry guns over a deep river four hundred and fifty mètres wide under fire from the enemy. Even in the night the attempt might be frustrated, since the range at every point was known to the Russians.

Chapter IX

BRIDGING THE YALU.

It is always an interesting and instructive spectacle to behold the inventive genius of man engaged in a struggle with mighty forces, and to observe courage, skill and endurance overcome obstacles that seem insurmountable. The situation in which the Japanese found themselves on the banks of the Yalu called for the exercise of all these qualities in a supreme degree. How they made a passage over this net work of rivers in face of an enemy entrenched in the heights and within range of artillery will be memorable in the history of war.

The work of reconnaissance was undertaken by officers and men, some of whom swam the rivers and brought back reports as to the places suitable for bridging, the exact locality of fords and their depth, the positions available for artillery, and the nature and strength of the forces on the islands and in the hills to the north of Tiger Hill. Many of these brave men lost their lives, but they did not die in vain. The engineers, who had worked without rest for thirty-eight days, and had worn their spades and axes down in the wood, displayed daring and energy that seemed to be inexhaustible. The sappers of the Second Division, who, since their landing in Korea, had constructed one hundred and fifty

miles of road, discovered two or three old canoes which the Russians had broken up and left as useless. These they repaired, and with them navigated the river at night in search of places that might be bridged for heavy guns and field guns.

The howitzers, whose presence was unknown to the Russians, were to be taken across the branch stream to the island of Kontonto. A suitable place was found about two thousand mètres West of Wiju, where the stream was only seven mètres wide, and the bank on each side was high enough to screen the pioneers. In this work none of the regular bridging material of the army was to be used, and pontoons had to be made from material collected five miles away. Six boats and several rafts were built, and were supplemented by a few old boats that were water-logged in the river. On the night of April 27th the bridging of the stream was begun, and at five o'clock next morning it was completed. Next day while some repairs were in progress the Russians opened fire on the pontoons, but did no damage, and on the night of the 29th the heavy artillery passed safely over to Kontonto island, where they were cleverly concealed in empalments screened with trees and brushwood.

For the field guns a second bridge was built at a point two hundred and eighty mètres West of Wiju, also from material gathered in the neighbourhood. Here, in some parts, the stream was two mètres deep and icy cold. The work was begun on the night of

April 25th, and at four o'clock next morning seven men were so benumbed that they had to be rescued from drowning. In three hours they recovered and resumed their labours. On the morning of the 26th the Russians discovered the bridge, and bombarded it for three hours from Tiger Hill. No harm was done until nine o'clock, when the batteries on Conical Hill opened fire, and one shell struck the bridge, wounding an engineer. Despite the cannonade the work went on without interruption until an order came from head-quarters to stop during the day time. Anxious that the enemy should not think that his men feared shell fire, the officer in command told the sappers to withdraw slowly one by one. After this the material was prepared during the day behind the hills, and the work of construction was resumed under cover of darkness. The bridge was finished by the morning of the 27th, and on the night of the 29th the field guns were transferred to Kontonto island.

Next morning it was decided that these guns must be carried over the main stream of the Yalu. Bridging was impossible, for the river was four hundred and fifty mètres wide, and within three thousand mètres of the Russian position. The order was given at nine o'clock, and eight hours afterward twenty-one pontoons were collected on the river North of Wiju where they could not be seen by the enemy. As soon as it was dark this fleet of pontoons dropped silently down the stream, keeping intervals of fifty mètres in case the Russians

opened fire. At seven o'clock they were in front of the island Chonchagtai, and one officer and one private landed in order to find a suitable place for disembarking the guns. Three stages were erected on each side of the river, and at half-past nine o'clock the infantry guard of the guns began to cross the broad and swift stream. Each pontoon carried thirty-two men, and the boats took from fifteen to seventeen minutes in making the journey. A hasty reconnaissance showed that the island of Chonchagtai had been abandoned by the enemy, and the guns were ferried over in the pontoons. At three o'clock the work was completed without accident, and before dawn pontoons, tools, and material had vanished. Seven hours later some pontoons again crossed the river with ammunition for the guns and were fired upon. Two pontoons were struck by fragments of the same shell, and appeared to be sinking under a cloud of smoke, out of which rang triumphant shouts of "Banzai!" Help was sent instantly, and the boats were brought safely to shore. One of the pontoons had nine holes in it, and one of the planks was smashed to pieces; the other had seven holes—all, fortunately, above the water line. Two of the rowers were wounded, one severely and the other slightly. Neither left the oars for a second, though both fainted as soon as they were carried ashore.

Another bridge was ordered to be thrown across the main stream in front of Tiger Hill, where the water was very deep, the river bed too hard for piles

and the current so swift that two or three anchors were required for each boat. Neither nails nor anchors were in store and the pontoons had to be made from material collected about two thousand mètres further up stream. An ingenious officer ordered his men to search the Korean houses for ploughshares, horse-shoes, sickles, hatchets, and any metal tools. The ploughshares were turned into anchors and the rest into nails. The work began on the night of April 28th, and by noon on the 30th seventy-five pontoons were ready to span the river, which at that point was three hundred and thirty mètres wide. West of Tiger Hill the branch of the Ai-ho is very deep, and here another bridge was made, two companies of infantry having been sent to drive the enemy from Tiger Hill and to select positions for a battery of field guns.

It was of vital importance that the enemy should not discover the point at which the Twelfth Division, which was to make the flanking movement, would cross the Yalu. Suikochin, to the North-east of Wiju, was the place selected, and was bridged with the greatest secrecy and in the shortest possible time. Material was collected higher up the river and floated down stream in the darkness. As the road from Wiju to Suikochin was visible to the enemy the utmost care and vigilance had to be exercised, and the bridges had to be put together under cover of the hills.

Before the battle began ten bridges were constructed. Their united length was 2,126 mètres; half

of them were made from material found in the neighbourhood; the other half were the regular pontoons of the army.

The positions of the bridges are shown on the accompanying map.

These elaborate preparations were made with remarkable speed and secrecy. The terrain was on the whole favourable. The low hills about Wiju concealed the movement of troops and the work of engineers. Every part of the road under the enemy's observation was screened by artificial avenues of firs and arches of maize straw which, from a distance, looked like natural growth, so that neither battallions nor batteries could be seen and counted as they descended the higher ground towards Wiju.

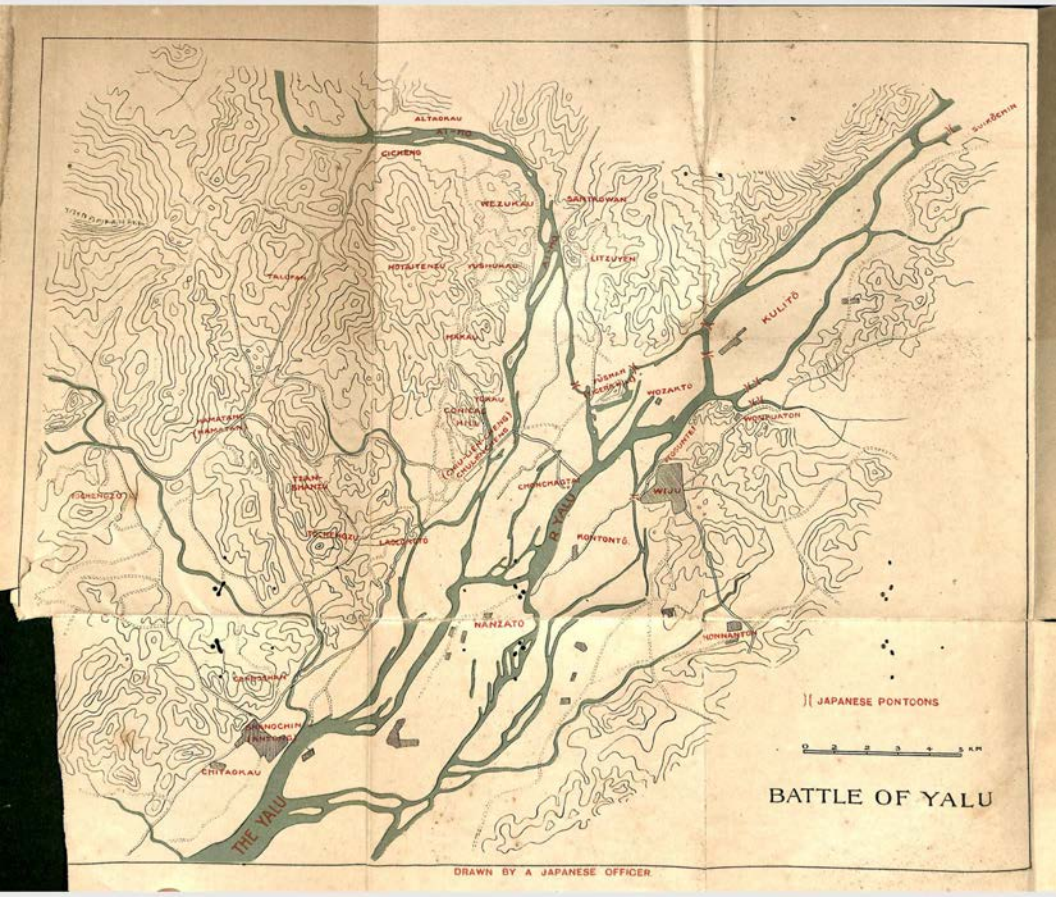
It must not be imagined, however, that these plans altogether escaped the vigilance of the Russians or were effected without opposition.

Chapter X

PREPARING FOR BATTLE.

To associate violence and death with the valley of the Yalu seemed a sacrilege, so tranquil it looked and so beautiful. The sun lighted up the dark ridges and gilded the tawny sand through which flowed rivers that separated the broad plain into islands. Away to the East lay a wild forest country given over to hunters. Westward, as the estuary opened its arms to the embrace of the sea, rose the smoke of a city in the shadow of receding hills. Between city and forest were scattered hamlets and homesteads that sheltered a race of white-robed peasants. A strange stillness brooded over the valley: the air was charged with mystery: and mountain and river were heavy with portent. The great heart of nature had ceased to beat and life in the delta was suspended. With furled sails the junks rested in the yellow creeks: no oxen wandered in the fields or bemoaned their burden of rice straw: no husbandman made ready for seed time. The whole scene looked and felt like painted canvas.

This was the valley of the Yalu, which from its source to the sea forms the frontier between Korea and Manchuria. The black specks that crawled like insects over ridge and flat were men awaiting the word of


ALTAOKAU
CICHENG
WEZUKAU
SANTAOWAN
LITZUYEH
MOTAITENEU
TUSHUKAU
TALIPAN
HEKAU
KULITÔ
WOZAKTO
TOKAU
CONICAL HILL
HAMATONG
TEAN-BHANTO
CHENCHAOTON
R. YALU
WIJU
MONTONTÔ
LAOCHENGZU
NANZATO
HONNANTON
CHITAOKAU
THE YALU
JAPANESE PONTOONS
BATTLE OF YALU
DRAWN BY A JAPANESE OFFICER

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command that was to make these silent hills resound with the thunders of battle. Our horses picked their way through the squalid streets and halted at the head-quarters of the Guards. A wooden gate, shaped like a temple, told us in Chinese characters that this was Wiju—"The Stronghold of the West." Through the walls of the city have poured again and again the invading armies of China, for Wiju is the ford of the Yalu, and along the track that resumes its march among the mountains has been borne for centuries the tribute paid by the Emperor of Korea to his suzerain in Pekin. Most of the inhabitants had fled and the mean lanes of thatched hovels had a depressing aspect.

Passing through the North Gate we came to a steep hill crowned with a temple—Toguntai, or "The place from which to command an Army"—and saw far below us a splendid panorama of mountain and river. In bands of green and gold the delta meandered seaward among streams of dark blue and tawny brown. Rugged heights, seamed with deep gorges, reached down to the Northern shore. Against the blue sky beyond, range after range of hills purpled in the distance. The slopes were scored with passes through which rode Russian horsemen. Westward the mountains recede and are less precipitous, leaving ample space for the group of houses known as Chiu-lien-cheng, which is not a walled town as the name implies. Near slate-roofed barracks stood a few Cossacks: others rode slowly down towards the river Ai that flows within two thousand mètres of the

hamlet. On the hills above Chiu-lien-cheng could be traced earth works and trenches that commanded the highway along which an army from the South must pass. Seaward, in the shadow of low receding hills, lay the Manchurian town of Antung with a population of 150,000 and a considerable trade in nankeens, oil, iron, and timber, as the junks in the creek testified.

This was the Russian position on the North bank of the estuary of the Yalu. In physical aspect it bore a strong resemblance to the position that confronted General Buller on the Tugela. There was the plain of the delta with the unfordable river beyond, and behind that were the rugged heights in which the Russians were entrenched. Their left flank rested on mountains that appeared inaccessible to large bodies of troops and unsuited to any operations other than those of guerilla warfare; their right wing was covered by a broad deep river, while their front must be approached over a network of streams and flat country. According to the rules of war the position was impregnable. The only vulnerable point seemed to be on the right, where the Yalu is navigable by ships of shallow draft, and a cultivated plain stretches to the foot of receding hills that diminish in height as they draw nearer to the mouth of the estuary.

On Friday, April 22nd, the Russians made their first effort to discover the strength of their adversaries and to ascertain at what point an attempt would be made to force the passage of the river. Four junks manned

by infantry crossed over from the West of Antung. They were driven back by rifle fire and returned to the Manchurian side under cover of guns on a hill to the North-west of Antung. About the same time a thousand Cossacks were despatched to feel for the Japanese right flank. Fording the Yalu at Piek-tung, they disarmed some Korean soldiers and left three hundred troopers to occupy the place until the 28th, when they fell back across the river to Tchó-san before the advance of a Japanese battalion.

The Japanese completed their preparations on April 24th; their pontoons were ready and in their appointed places; their troops were massed in Wiju and behind the hills to the South; their gun positions had been well chosen to cover pioneers and landing parties and were artfully masked. But before the streams could be bridged the enemy must be driven from the islands of Kulito and Chonchagtai as well as from Tiger Hill. On the evening of the 25th, two gunboats, two torpedo boats, and two armed launches entered Yongampo and made a demonstration in the direction of Antung with the object of deceiving the enemy as to the direction of the real attack.

At half-past three o'clock on the morning of the 26th, our camp, two miles South of Wiju, was roused by Captain Okada with a message from Head Quarters. We were to witness the operation of driving the Russian outposts from the islands. At eight o'clock the sound of rifle fire on the East told that the landing had

begun and that the enemy had not been taken by surprise. Several boats manned by infantry and sappers put off from Kontonto across the main stream. They met with but feeble resistance and after a few casualties secured a footing on the island. The Russian infantry from the cover of Tiger Hill kept up a show of opposition while some Cossacks were sent to reinforce, but came too late. Their retirement was covered by a Hotchkiss gun on Tiger Hill which afterwards opened fire on Wiju, burning two houses and killing several natives. The Japanese guns remained silent and refused to disclose their position. Next day the enemy's cannonade was resumed, being directed mainly against the bridge in course of construction West of the town.

On the 28th, two companies of Guards crossed the branch of the Yalu to Tiger Hill and drove the Russians from the promontory. At 4 p.m. on the following day a Russian battalion, with four guns, attacked the position and compelled the Guards to retire to Kulito, leaving the enemy again in possession of Tiger Hill. This temporary occupation of Tiger Hill caused the Russians to abandon Chonchagtai on the 28th. They accordingly set fire to the buildings, sparing only the temple, and for several hours smoke and flame stretching for nearly a mile across the island masked the movements of the enemy.

Meanwhile preparations were made for the flanking movement. The mixed brigade, which had marched from Anju through Yusan to Shojo, collected material for bridging, and floated it down the river to Suikochin,

thirteen miles North-east of Wiju, where the Twelfth Division were to cross. At first it was proposed to despatch a force from Shojo to the other side of the river with the object of drawing the Russians in that direction and relieving the pressure on the Japanese front. But lack of bridging material and ignorance of the conditions North of the Yalu over-ruled this project as dangerous. The mixed brigade accordingly retired on April 29th, and rejoined the Twelfth Division at Suikochin, leaving only a few men to guard against surprise on the extremity of the right flank. There was, however, little fear that the enemy would attempt to cross at Shojo, where they would find themselves in mountainous country, and have difficulty in obtaining supplies.

The general plan of attack was made known in an army order issued at ten o'clock on the morning of April 28th. Some changes were afterwards made, but they did not materially affect the scheme.

The Twelfth Division were to cross the Yalu at Suikochin on the night of the 29th, and by the evening of the 30th were to hold the line from Tiger Hill to Litsuyen. On the following day they were to advance to Santowan. The duty of this Division was to cover the crossing of the main army. If possible, General Inouye was to send a detachment to Altaokau to threaten the left wing and rear of the enemy who were entrenched at Makau and Yushukau on the north bank of the Ai-ho.

The Second Division, which formed the left flank, were to assemble at Shasanton, South-east of Wiju, at ten o'clock on the morning of the 30th, and to march at midnight to Wonfuaton, where four bridges spanned two branch streams of the Yalu. From the island of Kulito they were to pass by way of Tiger Hill to a position in front of the Ai-ho. The Second Regiment of artillery (Second Division) were to be stationed on the left bank of the main stream at Chonchagtai, and were to be ready to open fire at daybreak on the 30th.

The Guards Division, having fewer difficulties to overcome, were to follow the same route as the Second Division on the night of the 30th, and to take up a position between the Twelfth and Second Divisions.

The howitzer regiment was to occupy a position on Kontonto island on the 29th. One reserve battalion was posted near the howitzers to guard them and the field guns.

The reserve, which consisted of four infantry battalions and five squadrons of cavalry, were to muster at four o'clock on the morning of May 1st on the island of Kulito.

Chapter XI

THE FIRST ENCOUNTER.

THE moment was drawing near when the armies would meet and the vaunted might of Russia would be put to the test. How would it fare with the Japanese? Victorious at sea, would they be conquerors on land? The people of Great Britain and the United States were divided between amazement at the presumption and admiration of the daring of the "little Japs." Those who measure the strength of armies by statistics of area and population, and by quotations from the Stock Exchange, had no doubt that the bigger country would win. Military men, satisfied by parades, manœuvres, and official reports, were convinced that Russia would vindicate the laws of military science and crush her rival. Politicians hoped for the best and feared the worst. One member of the British Government discovered a new ground for faith. He was "sure the Japanese would win, because every military man said they could not!"

As for the Japanese soldiers, never for a moment did they dream that they could be beaten by "a corrupt, immoral, and illiterate people like the Russians." The worst they anticipated was a heavy casualty list. General

Fujii, mindful of the Russo-Turkish war, ordered the Medical Staff to prepare for five thousand wounded.

The Russians had plenty of time to make their dispositions. For several weeks they had held the north bank of the Ai-ho with twenty thousand infantry and Cossacks and forty-eight guns. In contesting the passage of a river it is obviously necessary to keep a large reserve with which to strike the enemy when he attempts to cross. But in a country devoid of lateral communications—like that occupied by the Russians—this precaution could be adopted only on one condition: that the point of attack was known. To concentrate at Antung, if the Japanese crossed at Suikochin or at Fushan, would be fatal. The plan of defence must be well conceived from the beginning or it was destined to fail. Now the Russian General could not learn the direction of the attack. The movements of the Japanese puzzled him, as it was intended that they should. Some of the younger officers believed that the crossing would be effected on the upper reaches of the Yalu near Suikochin, and urged that the left flank should be strengthened. This theory met with no support among the senior officers, who thought that no serious movement could be made in such difficult country. Others maintained that the Japanese would bridge the river between Wiju and Chiu-lien-cheng, and would follow the Imperial Pekin road. But the weight of authority was in favour of Antung, where it was comparatively easy to bridge the Yalu. In that belief General Zasselitch was

confirmed by the naval demonstrations that took place in front of Antung, and he accordingly posted his reserves near that place.

On the last day of April the Russian front extended along the North bank of the river Ai for a distance of nearly eighteen miles. Their right flank was at Antung, their centre at Chiu-lien-cheng, and their left wing rested on the mountains near Wezukau. One regiment was stationed at Antung, on the hill to the North of which was a battery of eight guns; a regiment and a half, with two field batteries, held Chiu-lien-cheng; at Yushukau was another regiment with one battery; to the North of Wezukau were two companies of infantry and one field battery, and in the heights about Hamatan, to the West of Chiu-lien-cheng, where the road from Antung branches West to Feng-hoang-cheng, were posted two regiments in reserve, with one battery. Both flanks were protected by cavalry, General Mistchenko being at Tajushan, some miles to the West of Antung, where it was anticipated that the Japanese would attempt to land a small force. The hills were entrenched at several points; trenches commanded the river bank; upon summit and ridge were gun emplacements and sungars. These works were constructed by the infantry, aided by Chinese, the engineers being occupied with the roads and bridges on the line of communication which passed through Feng-hoang-cheng to Liao-yang. No attempt had been made to mask the trenches, which were of the most primitive design, and gave neither head cover nor protection against shell fire.

The Japanese lay in the hills about Wiju on the South bank of the Yalu—an army of three Divisions of forty-five thousand men, with twelve batteries of field guns, six mountain batteries, and two sections of five-inch howitzers. Their line extended from Suikochin to the South-west of Wiju. Between the two armies was the valley of the Yalu—a plain of sand and bush, intersected by rivers.

The position of the Russian flank and the nature of the terrain between the Yalu and the Ai called for a movement which in face of an energetic and well-informed enemy might have proved disastrous. A glance at the map will show that if the attack on the Russian front and flank was to be simultaneous the Twelfth Division must advance twenty-four hours before the Divisions at the centre and on the left. To arrive in front of the Russian position on the Ai-ho and to cover the crossing of the other divisions the Twelfth had to traverse the mountainous country between Suikochin and Litzuyen. General Kuroki determined to take the risk of dividing his command by sending one division in advance across the river. In order to divert attention from this movement the gunboat Maya and two torpedo boats renewed their demonstration near Antung on the morning of the 29th and bombarded the enemy's position North of the Yalu. At eleven o'clock forty or fifty Cossacks with two guns appeared in front of Suikochin but were compelled to seek refuge in the hills. The enemy's outpost having been driven in, a

covering party of one battalion was ferried over under fire from the Russian guns.

The battery North of Wiju replied, and by two o'clock the battalion occupied a position that gave security to the engineers, who immediately began to bridge the river. This, as we have seen, was a difficult task, the current being swift (1.80 mètres per second), the water eight mètres deep and two or three anchors being required for each pontoon. The bridge was completed by three o'clock on the morning of the 30th, and the Twelfth Division crossed to the North bank of the Yalu.

The night of the 29th of April was one of great anxiety to General Kuroki and his staff. The army was divided by a deep river, and one division, upon whose safety depended the success or failure of the plan of attack, was executing the hazardous operation of deploying at right angles to its line of march within easy range of the enemy's guns. At any moment the Russians might seize the occasion to deliver a counter attack. General Kuroki had, however, the consolation of knowing that in such difficult country it would take time to develop such an attack, and that the Twelfth Division might be depended upon to hold the line. Meanwhile, every precaution was taken to prevent surprise. Three batteries and a regiment of infantry were posted on Kontonto island; the guns North of Wiju were trained on the point of danger, and two divisions concentrated at Wiju were ready to march at a moment's notice.

Chapter XII

THE PASSAGE OF THE YALU.

THE night passed without alarm, and on the morning of April 30th the guns on the heights above Chiu-lien-cheng began to speak once more. Soon after dawn the Russian General discovered that his left flank was in danger, and withdrew it to a position North of the Ai-ho.

Up to this moment General Kuroki was undecided as to the wisdom of disclosing his gun positions. It was a question with the staff whether the bombardment should begin on the 30th day of April or should be reserved for the day of assault. If the artillery opened on the 30th its position North of the main stream of the Yalu would be known to the Russians, who would retire their own guns further into the mountains. After anxious consideration it was determined that the Japanese artillery should remain silent as long as no fire was opened upon the pontoon bridges. In the event of any attempt to destroy the bridges the guns were ordered to reply. Precisely at eleven o'clock, when the sun was at their back and the light was in favour of the Japanese, the Russian guns were directed on the pontoons.

There was no longer need for concealment. The Japanese unmasked their batteries near Wiju and on the island of Kontonto. For two hours the duel raged with increasing violence. At first the Russian guns were turned upon some infantry scouts and against the pontoons, but they speedily abandoned these targets and strove to silence the batteries. The gunners on a conical hill, East of Chiu-lien-cheng, were especially active and were distinctly visible against the sky line. Upon this hill the Japanese presently opened a severe and concentrated cannonade with field gun and howitzer. Shell after shell crowned the summit with smoke and flame. Surely nothing could live in that inferno, yet the Russians stood to their guns and answered shell with shell. But so deadly was the fire that courage gave place to discretion, and three dark objects appeared on the slope making their way toward the road that wound into the valley beyond.

They were guns and their teams. How slowly they moved through the smoke and flame, as shrapnel rained upon them and common shell rent the earth about them like some mighty convulsion of nature. Not a yard did they cover but the iron leapt upon them with the force of a hurricane. Now a horse rolled over; now a man stumbled forward to rise no more. Still the storm swept over them—one second a blue smoke in the air that told of shrapnel, and the next a geyser of brown earth that marked the explosion of common shell. The scene caught one by the throat and held the breath. It

lasted little more than half an hour, but it seemed an age of agony. Life had departed from the dark objects; they lay on the hillside motionless—the dead gunners and their guns.

Meanwhile along the foot of the mountains across the river wound a thin black line like a mamba uncoiling its length out of a ravine. The sight of it called to my memory the dark cataract that flowed from the heights beyond Lombards Kop to engulf the men at Nicholson's Nek. This was the Japanese infantry on the right who had made good their footing and were swarming up the precipitous slopes to storm the left wing of the Russian army, and to perform a feat of arms more daring and successful than that which gave General de Wet his first victory in Natal. Upward and onward they went—now vanishing in some dark depression; now visible against the bare rock, until at last they began to fall over the crest like a mountain torrent that swept down to the banks of the river Ai. The Russians could not have been ignorant of this incursion, but for a long time they gave no sign. Presently three or four mounted men came down from the low hills North-east of Tiger Hill and halted under cover of the houses near the river. Their mission was quickly apparent. The buildings burst into flame and the Cossacks rode off into the smoke, followed by shrapnel from the battery East of Wiju.

The night of the 30th was one of crowded yet silent activity on the South bank of the Yalu and the

island of Kontonto. Two Divisions—the Guards and the Second—had still to cross and pontoons had to be placed. At ten o'clock all was ready and men and guns passed over. The speed and silence with which these movements were effected was remarkable. Every man knew his part and his place: there was no noise or confusion: the approaches to the river were screened and the men reached them from behind sheltering hills: the pontoons were padded with straw and matting. Meanwhile two important problems had been solved by a few gallant officers—whether the field guns on Kontonto island could be moved to Temple island, and whether the river Ai must be bridged or could be forded. In the event of disaster the guns must inevitably be lost, as there was no means of retreat across the river and the only way to reach Temple island was by pontoon ferries. Late in the night the batteries were ferried over to Temple island. For men to cross the Ai under rifle fire seemed a hopeless task, and many suggestions were made and discussed. One proposal was that the men should carry floats of wood or small tubs: another that a picked body of swimmers prepared to die should cross the river with leading ropes for their comrades.

Happily neither of these adventurous schemes proved necessary. A ford was found; the water came up to the neck and was under rifle fire, yet that sufficed for the Japanese. On the night of the 30th the Twelfth Division occupied a position with its right on

Sandoan and its front toward the river Ai at Ishiko : the Guards Division was north of Tiger Hill on the South bank of the Ai : and the Second Division formed on the South-west of Temple island. Small wonder if the Russians were surprised by the rapidity of this manœuvre. According to the story told by prisoners, they believed that at least a week would be required by the Japanese to complete their crossing to Temple island, and they did not credit the report that they had with them heavy guns.

It was on the morning of the 1st of May that the Japanese won their great victory on the Yalu. A strange stillness haunted hill and dale as we rode from camp to the scene of the final struggle. The path across the cultivated plain was deserted : the sentries had left the bridge unguarded, and only deep ruts and hoof-prints told that an army had passed. Wiju was a city of the dead.

We entered through the stone arch which was a gate in the olden time, and the tramp of our horses' hoofs echoed along the silent streets of mean houses. Taking our appointed places near the tower overlooking the river, we awaited the attack. The sun rose upon a scene that banished all thought of war. At our feet flowed the rivers that form the delta. The central and main stream of the Yalu has the deep blue of the *lapis lazuli*, and shone like a girdle between the yellow sand and the dark green bush.

Away beyond the river plain rose the bare and silent hills, in the shadow of which slumbered the village of Chiu-lien-cheng with its tiled houses and walls of light stone. Only when you looked very closely could you discover signs of the impending conflict. Among the shrub near the island lurked dark forms denoting men and howitzers; behind the charred ruins of houses on Temple island lay more dark figures; they filled the dongas, the trenches and the broken ground. The stillness was uncanny and the question rose to every lip: "Have the Russians fled?" The moments crept on and still our eyes and ears sought some sign of the presence of the enemy. A few scouts were sent forward and were not fired upon. Was it the design of the enemy to draw the Japanese across the river and fall upon them unexpectant? If that was their hope it was destined to fall. At last the silence was broken by field gun and howitzer, but it was from the Japanese side. The batteries posted under Tiger Hill and the howitzers on the South island sent their shells screaming through the air to the heights beyond the river. Shot after shot was fired, yet drew forth no response save the echo of their reverberation among the mountains. Surely the enemy had retired, and the order to advance would be given. But the Japanese were not lured into recklessness. The bombardment went on systematically. The foothills in front of the Russian position have many spurs and ravines. To the slopes East of Chiu-lien-cheng was turned the fire of thirty-six guns from Tiger Hill

while the howitzers bombarded the heights above the position. Every nook and cranny was searched again and again; the slopes obverse and reverse were rent with common shell and rained upon with shrapnel; and the crests spurted flame and smoke. To anyone without experience of shell-fire and its effects it must have seemed that nothing could live in such a hell. For more than an hour—from half-past five until nearly seven o'clock—the hills were ransacked for sign of the enemy, but not a sound came back.

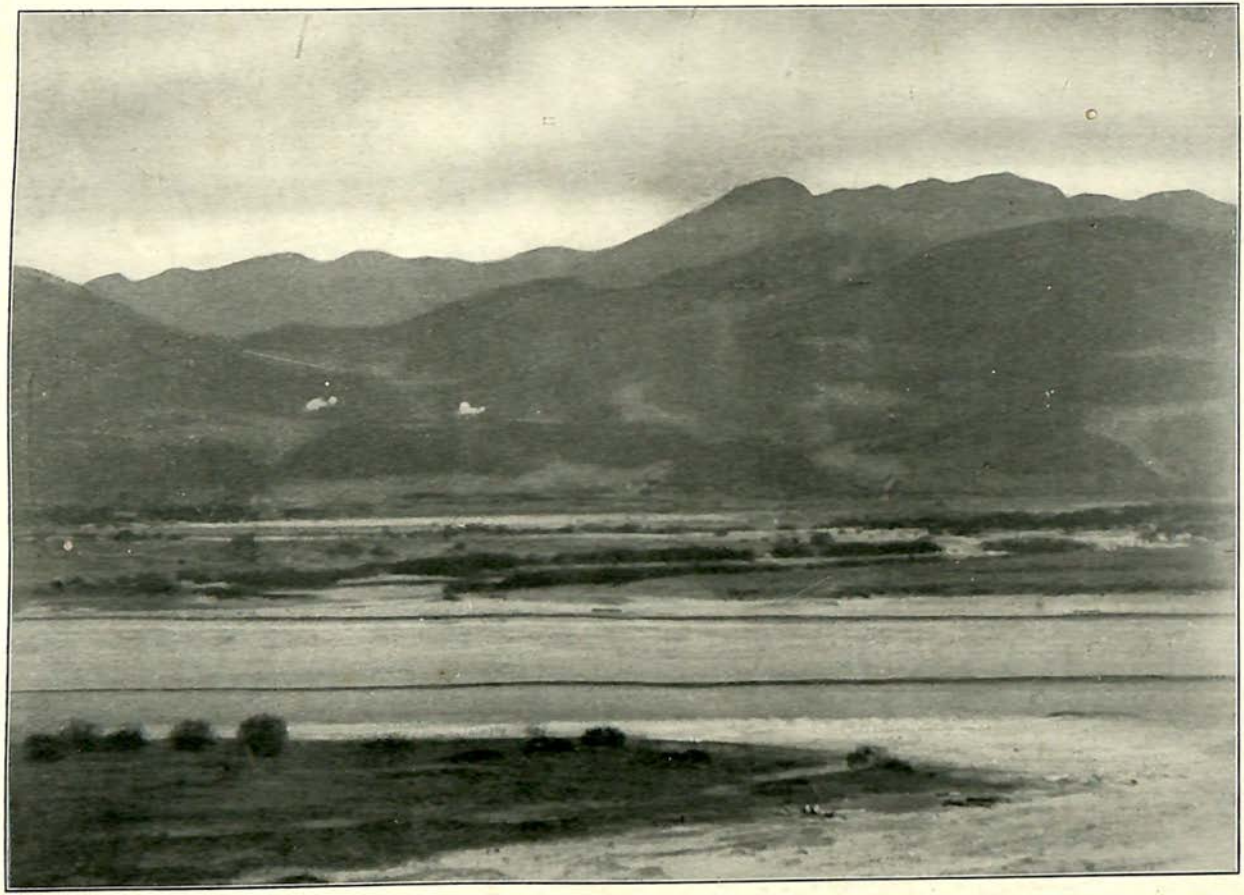
The order for the general attack was given and from the plain rose the small sturdy figures of the Japanese infantry. Their dark blue uniform showed up against the sand and bush. What targets they were for gun and rifle! Surely the Russians must sleep or have gone upon a journey! The line extended Eastward from beyond Chiu-lien-cheng, nearly ten miles, with a front of six miles, and the right flank—four miles long—thrown forward. You saw the skirmishers advancing steadily in open order and behind them the fighting line with the reserves well under cover in the rear. Near to the left flank a little to the East of Conical Hill the troops were in echelon column of company and began to deploy only as they approached rifle range. On the left the formation was much closer than experience in South Africa would have led us to adopt, but the Japanese had no faith in what it pleased them to call "Boer tactics."

Still the mountains in front are silent, though the

sound of artillery and rifle fire came feebly back from the extreme right, where the enemy was apparently on the defensive. At half-past seven o'clock the infantry on the left advanced at the double and began to ford the river. A cheer resounded over river and plain as they dashed into the stream. The water reached up to their necks. With rifles held high in the air, the Japanese plunged through the Ai-ho, many of them stripped to the skin. Then the hills spoke. From the upper ground and foothills about Chiu-lien-cheng : from the slope and base of Conical Hill : and from the higher ground came the burr-burr of machine guns and sharp volley of rifles. Many rolled over in the river and were swept away, but the line formed on the further bank and went on. Again volleys flew toward them and machine guns rattled. The effect of this sudden awakening of the hills was to check the advance and to send the front line of the Japanese back at the double. They retired in good order, opening out as they came and taking cover where the nature of the ground permitted. Many fell, however, and there were significant gaps in the line when it reached shelter. Once more guns and howitzers came into action, and the foothills were searched with a destructive fire. While this artillery preparation was in progress the troops East of Chiu-lien-cheng extended by the left, and changing front advanced upon the hills. They met with considerable opposition, but held steadily on their way.

The spur of the hill East of Chiu-lien-cheng, which guards the ravine along which the road ascends was held

tenaciously. The narrow and precipitous gorge was entrenched along the base and slopes, and the crest was crowned with earthworks and empalements. Toward this point the left, having rallied, advanced once more. Steadily, and in more extended order, they moved across the plain with their backs to the river. Officers on horseback directed their movements as calmly as on parade. and men, now singly, now in groups, dropped into the river and forded to their comrades. In a few moments the line was moving toward the spur in the shape of a bow well strung, and a shield of rifles was cast about the foot of the hill. Here they remained and fought with the utmost bravery and stubbornness, suffering heavily, as one could see from the gaps in their formation. Twice the fighting line was reinforced, and all the time over their heads sang the shells from the howitzers, rending the earth about the trenches, and covering the hill sides with clouds of brown dust. Thus the minutes passed. and the shield drew closer and closer about the spur. But the resistance was desperate, though unaided by artillery, and it was clear that the position must be taken in reverse. The left centre was already well forward, and was rapidly approaching the foot of the ridge from which stands Conical Hill. The opposition here was feeble, for the enemy was retiring, and made only one effort to reinforce the trenches in the pass. Once across the flat, the left centre swarmed up the slope, a flag marking their progress. Away on the extreme right the Twelfth Division was pressing home the flanking



A close View of the Yalu.

[*facing p.* 84

attack, and the guns on the high ground north had been silenced by the batteries on Tiger Hill.

The position was taken. On the reverse slope East of Chiu-lien-cheng the Japanese were now in force. Their flag was climbing higher and higher up the hill until it waved proudly from the crest, and thunderous cheers echoed from the walls and towers of Wiju. The left was still advancing on Chiu-lien-cheng under cover of guns that searched even crevices in the hills beyond. In a moment more they reached the line of stone houses, and were moving toward the hills, while others tending to the East rushed the shoulder of the heights on the West of the pass. Upon this spur, sheltered from observation by the peak of the hill they stood in dense mass. Suddenly hurtling through the air came two shells. A spurt of brown earth sprang from their midst, and the mass breaking into fragments scattered down the hill. Sixteen inanimate forms showed where the shells had fallen short. It was an accident common enough in battle—one of the kind witnessed at Elandslaagte when our gunners shelled our own advance.

Hard pressed on both flanks, their communications threatened by the rapidity with which the movement of their left was developing, there was nothing left for the Russians but to retire. Some, who had remained in the trenches, fled up the pass. You could see them hurrying along the brown road, pursued by shrapnel and common shell. The gun empalement on the summit was wreathed in flame through which men passed unscathed,

and disappeared over the ridge. One man I saw turn back for a wounded comrade. He did not return. The gorge now swarmed with dark uniforms, and an officer carrying a flag—white, with the red sun for centre—mounted the crest, and planted the Japanese ensign on the Russian earthworks amid shouts of "Banzai."

Chapter XIII

THE PURSUIT AND THE LESSONS.

Victory was won, yet work was not over. Reserves were called up to pursue, and guns forded the river in support. Advancing in three columns the Japanese strove to keep touch with the demoralised foe. Well forward on the right marched the reserves of the Twelfth Division ; in the centre, on the Pekin road, were the Guards' reserves, and on the left, near Antung, were those of the Second Division. On each flank rode a regiment of cavalry, and lumbering well in the rear came a field battery. The Russians were retreating toward Feng-hoang-cheng. Three thousand who had been left at Antung were obliged to retire in a North-easterly direction as far as Hamatan, where they could reach the main road. It was the critical position of this detatched force that led to the final disaster. Convinced that the passage of the river would be attempted near Antung the Russians remained until escape became difficult. To hold the junction of the roads along which these three thousand must retire was the duty of the reserves at Hamatan. One battalion of infantry and two batteries of artillery made a desperate stand near

these heights upon which the Japanese reserves were rapidly advancing. One company of the Twelfth Division, outstripping their comrades, seized the high ground in rear of the Russians and cut off their retreat. And now was waged a combat of heroes. Again and again the enemy strove to force its passage through the hills. But Captain Makizawa and his handful of men of the 24th Regiment were resolved to die rather than allow their enemy to escape. Rifle and gun showered death upon them, but they held on until the last cartridge was spent, and only one officer remained alive. Hope was gone, but death remained. One half of this gallant company had fallen. The remnant fixed bayonets and prepared to fall in a mad rush upon batteries and battalions. But help was at hand. The reserves came up in the centre and on the right, and, without waiting for artillery, charged the position. Led by a priest with uplifted crucifix some of the Russians made good their escape. Many of the rearguard fell ; the gunners fought to the last, and then, disabling their guns, raised the white flag. The Japanese fire ceased, and the surrender was completed.

Twenty-one field guns of the latest pattern and eight machine guns were among the spoils. One hundred dead Russians attested the gallantry with which the rearguard had done its duty. Six or seven more guns were also found in a ravine about four miles from the river where they had been abandoned when the Russians discovered that their left flank had been taken

A Cavalry Regiment crossing the River.

[*facing p.* 88

in reverse. Eight hundred wounded Russians were reported to have been carried to Feng-hoang-cheng; the number of slain was 1,362; and of wounded prisoners 475, making with 138 unwounded prisoners a casualty list of 1,775. The Japanese losses were remarkably small considering the nature of the ground and the character of the attack. Their casualties were returned at 860: five officers and 160 men killed, 29 officers and 666 men wounded. Among the Russians who died from wounds was General Kastalinsky, who was struck by a shell on Conical Hill.

The theory has been advanced that the Russians had no intention of holding the Yalu, and that their purpose was to draw the Japanese into the mountains of Manchuria. Evidence in support of this theory is hard to discover. Surely it was not necessary to lose twenty-one field guns and eight machine guns and to put three thousand men *hors de combat* in order to tempt an invading force across a river. There can, I think, be little doubt that the Russians were confident of their ability to defend a position of such great natural strength.

The general features of the position reminded me of the Tugela, with the plain in front, the unfordable river, and the mountains beyond. According to the testimony of prisoners, the Russians were taken by surprise by the rapidity and ease with which the Japanese crossed this network of rivers. Never for a moment did they dream that the passage would be

seriously attempted until four days later. Nor did they suspect the presence of heavy artillery until the howitzers opened fire on the 30th of April. There again we have the evidence of prisoners who declared that they did not credit the report that the Japanese had brought six-inch howitzers over the roads of Northern Korea.

An assumption of this kind was folly on the part of men who themselves had carried guns as far South as Anju at a time when the roads were in a worse condition. Nor could it have escaped their memory that the Japanese, having command of the sea, were able to land heavy guns within easy reach of Wiju. The long silence of the Japanese artillery under severe provocation no doubt tended to confirm the enemy in this delusion, but on the 30th of April they must have been well aware of the strength of the artillery South of the Yalu.

The terrible effect of the Japanese fire, both direct and indirect, may have aided the Russian General to arrive at the determination to retire his field guns and machine guns, but if that was the reason, why were they not moved earlier and to a safe distance? Only once in the action on May 1st was the Russian artillery used, and not more than half-a-dozen shots were fired before it was silenced. Seeing that the guns never came into action after the bombardment of the 30th, why were they not retired into the mountains beyond the possible reach of the enemy? It is not easy to explain

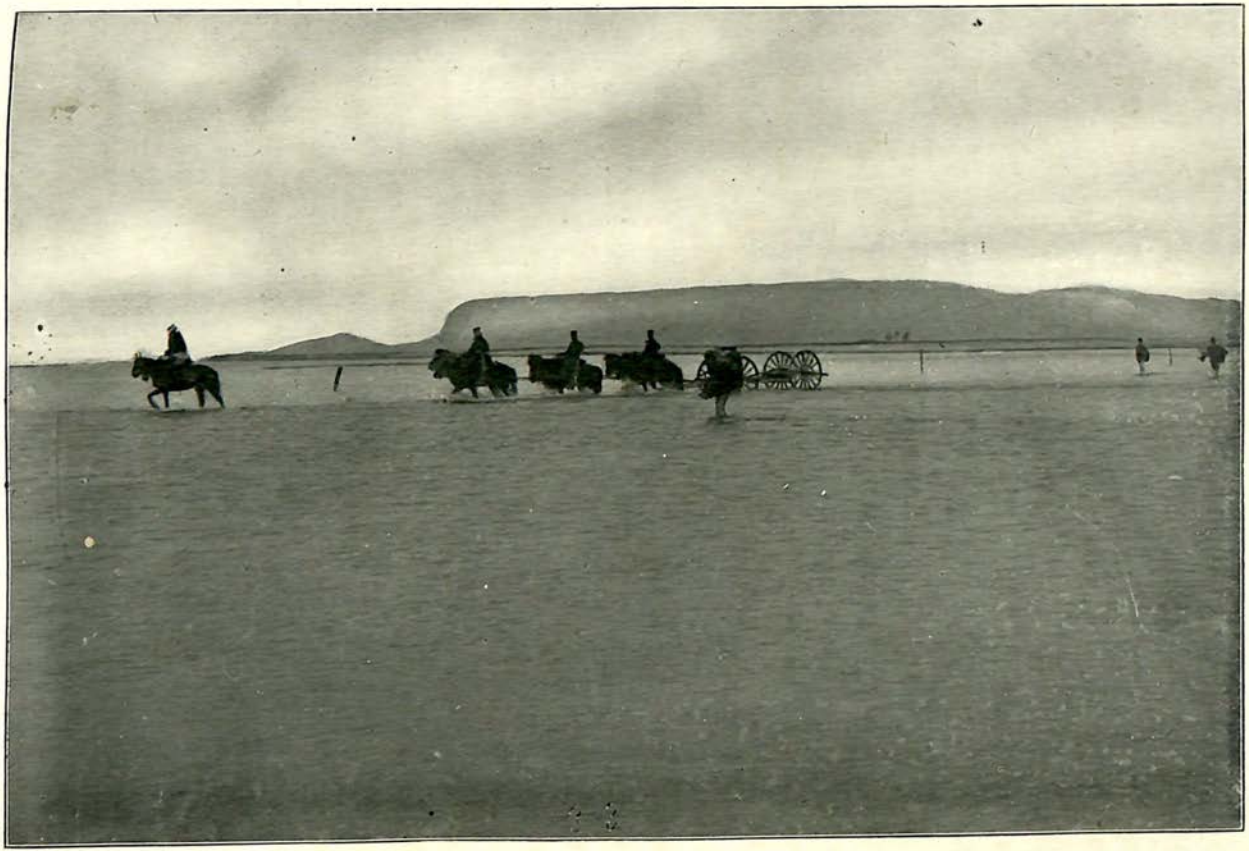
this lack of ordinary precaution on any other ground than overweening confidence or hopeless confusion and disorder.

Russian prisoners admitted that six thousand men were defending the Yalu, and this estimate probably took no account of the three thousand at Antung and the force on the left of the line. I cannot help thinking that in the hands of half as many Boers such a position might have been defended for several days even against so determined and gallant an enemy as the Japanese. But the Russians displayed little skill in selecting points of defence, or in constructing earthworks. Their gun positions were exposed.

The Japanese spoke of the trenches as exceedingly strong. I can only describe them as primitive and ineffective. The enemy's weakness in this respect accounts for the comparatively heavy casualties. A great proportion of the losses were due to shell fire, against which the trenches and sungars gave no protection. From the appearance of many of the slain it was clear that the explosive used in the Japanese common shell has terriffic power. The shells split up into a thousand fragments, with sharp edges that must have been so many swords hurled in every direction. In no other shells have I seen so many sharp pieces: it looked as if the shells not merely broke but laminated. One conclusion may fairly be drawn from the use that the Japanese made of common shell—that it is more effective than shrapnel even against exposed masses of men

and guns. The Japanese have learnt this lesson very thoroughly and make but sparing use of shrapnel, and then only to supplement the effect of common shell. They have also confirmed our experience in South Africa that the howitzer is a valuable auxiliary in the field, and has sufficient mobility so that it need not be tied to any fixed position.

The fight on the Yalu has been described as a frontal attack with all its defects. This description appears to me inaccurate. It is true that the left front was the first to get into close touch with the enemy on the 1st of May, and that in crossing the Ai-ho it suffered heavier losses than any other part of the line. But at least twelve hours before this the flanking movement on the extreme right had began to develope, and had shaken the confidence of the Russians to such a degree that they were falling back and had already withdrawn their guns. The Japanese claim that the trenches on the spur East of Chiu-lien-cheng were taken by direct assault. From that opinion I take the liberty to dissent. I was right in front of the position and could see clearly every movement of the attacking force. It is detracting nothing from the gallantry of the soldiers who fought so stubbornly with their backs to the river to say that the position was really taken in reverse by the left centre. Then only was the attack from the front pushed home to the point so stoutly defended by the enemy. No praise can be too great for the Japanese soldiers. On the eve of the battle they had not slept; they had to



A Gun Team in the Water.

[*facing p.* 92

march across a great sandy plain and to ford a river before they could engage the enemy. The victory however was complete, and was gained at a sacrifice that must be accounted very small.

The question naturally arises: Why did not the Russians attempt a counter attack as soon as the Twelfth Division crossed the river and was divided from the rest of the army. The Japanese reserves were at Kurito and the mountainous nature of the country did not favour rapid concentration toward the East, while the guns could not cover the extreme right. In 1894 the Chinese descended in great force from these mountains on the East and inflicted serious loss on the Japanese. Moreover, there was this in favour of a counter attack—that the Japanese having crossed the river were compelled to move through difficult country along a flank at right angles to their original line of advance. They would consequently have been under very serious disabilities had they been forced to retire. The Japanese certainly feared such a counter attack, and made preparations to restore the balance by holding the Second Division and the reserves in readiness to drive a wedge into the Russian centre. They had, however, every confidence in the capacity of the Twelfth Division to hold their own in the mountains, and that confidence was strengthened by manifest want of enterprise on the part of the enemy. But the greatest error of all was the tenacity with which the Russian commander clung to the belief that the crossing would be attempted in front

of Antung. As a consequence of this conviction the reserves were posted on the right wing at the back of Antung where they were useless in emergency and it was in extracting them from this position that the heavy losses in guns and men were sustained at Hamatan.

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Chapter XIV

AFTER THE BATTLE.

THE battle was over, and in the courtyard of a Manchurian house sat victor and vanquished. It was a strange and moving picture, such as Verestchagin might have painted. In the dark quadrangle flickered the embers of a wood fire, and around it were seated a prince and a soldier and his captives. The flame threw into relief the face of the soldier—a strong, clear-cut face—European rather than Oriental, over which a smile came readily. Between the firm-set lips glowed the red end of a cigar, without which General Kuroki is seldom seen. He sat at his ease, with cap pushed well over his forehead, and slippered feet crossed. The prince at his side was in full uniform, correct in every detail from spurs to sabretache, and his dark, immobile features wore an expression of intense solemnity. In the front of these two on the other side of the fire were seated three Russian officers—tall blonde men of Teutonic type, with fierce moustache, and the air of soldiers who know how to face death. They smoked and drank, and talked like comrades who

had fought side by side and were telling to friendly ears the story of the passage of the Yalu. One of them—the fiercest of all—had taken the cigarette from his lips and paused with glass in hand to speak.

"*Complêtement detruit*," were the words he said.

Around the circle of illuminated faces stood a group of soldiers in dark blue uniform. Some had rifles, that showed them to be the guard, but most of them had the intent look of men gazing at a spectacle that held thought in suspense. In the background, moving like shadows in the night, were armed men, whose faces bore the marks of exposure and fatigue. One little group stood near the low wall of a house examining the long line of Russian rifles that rested against the building. The stock of one had the deep dark stain of blood; the bayonet point of another was bent and broken, and the hands that gripped them that morning doubtless lay cold and stiff on the hills beyond. Officers came and went with lighted candles in their hands, leaving the darkness more intense as they passed hurriedly into houses that hummed like hives with the sound of voice and footfall.

Into this ever-changing throng came presently two battle-stained soldiers bearing a wounded man, with another limping by his side. They laid their groaning burden on the ground, and a figure stirred under the red blanket. The hand of the wounded soldier rested on his breast where the shirt was crimson.

"Meine liebe," were the whispered words from white dry lips. He was thinking of the dear ones at

On the Line of Retreat.

[*facing p. 96*

home on the far-away German frontier, and the tongue of his fireside came back to him. We raised his head, and put water to his parched and feverish lips, and the soldier sank back upon his bier muttering the prayer that is the common heritage of Christendom: "*Unser Vater.*" God grant his prayer passed upward with his soul.

Not a word did the Japanese soldiers understand, but wounds and death have a tongue that speaks to humanity, if not to men, and that the Japanese understand as well as any nation in the world. No woman could have been more gentle than the dark visaged warriors who motioned to the limping survivor of the fight to rest upon the ground. There he reclined, like an automoton, smoking the cigarette put into his hand, and uttering not a sound—the weary and hopeless figure of the soldier who has fought and lost.

While we looked pitifully on this picture of war the scene around the fire had changed. The Russian officers had risen and saluted their captors, and had passed with their armed escort into the darkness. Another circle had taken their place. Prone upon the ground lay the body of a man, naked to the waist, and over him bent the surgeon, whose skilful hand staunched the red blood that welled from a gaping wound in the breast.

The flickering light fell upon the white skin, and upon the crimson stain, and upon the drawn face. This is the realism of war—not its romance—as the heights about the Yalu testified that day.

How I came upon this scene is a story that I tell only because of certain incidents that illustrate some of the phases of a battle. When the fight ended, General Kuroki and his staff moved to the Conical Hill, East of of Chiu-lien-cheng, and despatched the reserves in pursuit of the enemy. They then advanced to the village where Head Quarters were established for the night. Meanwhile we had returned to our camp, two miles South of Wiju, and awaited orders. None came, and it was necessary to find Head Quarters in order to have our messages censored. Three miles from camp we came to the river, over which an unbroken line of carts and horses and men was passing. The bridge was flimsy to look upon, and shook under our horses feet, yet it had served the purpose of an army, and was now bearing the burden of heavy transport. The stream of stores and munitions of war rolled onward unceasingly with the dull roar of the ocean. By devious paths we approached the second affluent of the Yalu, and crossed over a pontoon bridge under which the current raced like a mill stream, keeping men busy with ropes and stanchions to prevent the boats from changing position in the line. Thus we landed on the second island—a plain of sand and scrub—the extent of which gave us our first true idea of the front across which the Japanese had to pass before they approached the hills beyond. Our only guide was the field wire, which rested now on the branch of a tree, now on a bare stick with a beer bottle for insulator, and now on the ground. In due time we

The Day after the Retreat.

[*facing p.* 98

came to the main stream of the Yalu, and crossed over to the Northern delta formed by the Ai-ho, which flows from the Ever White Mountain and joins the Yalu at Chiu-lien-cheng. The pontoon groaned under the weight of hurrying transport, as heavily laden carts, pack animals and coolies in the white dress of Korea hastened in the wake of the army. In the middle of the plain crouched Tiger Hill, like a huge beast of prey resting in the desert. From Wiju the hill is the outline of a tiger with his head to the East and his tail to the West. The reverse slope has no such shape; it is a range of mountains in miniature with broad flat summits and gentle inclines—a fortress in the plain giving command of the hill.

Riding across the level country we drew near to the hills on the North, and began to realise better the task that the Japanese had performed so brilliantly. Near Chiu-lien-cheng the hills descend to a sandy flat, through which runs the river Ai, which the soldiers forded up to their necks. We passed over at a shallower place where coolies were wading through three feet of water, and animals were rolling over with their packs. Here the river approaches very close to the foothills, but makes a bold sweep as it draws near to Chiu-lien-cheng. In this arc of a sandy circle we happened upon the field hospital. Around the white bell tent, over which floated the Red Cross, were gathered the wounded and the dying. Upon the ground lay an officer shot through the chest; there was blood also on his brow; his hands moved convulsively, and in his eyes was the look of death.

The work of saving the living was too urgent to spare precious moments upon those for whom there could be no hope, and the soldier calmly awaited release from suffering. Stretched upon the dissecting table was another officer with blond beard and blue eyes. The surgeon was dressing a wound in the thigh, while Colonel Hagino lighted a cigarette for the patient. The operating room of a London hospital could not have been more orderly or more clean than this field hospital to which wounded Japanese and Russians were borne upon stretchers. It was, however, a scene on which I did not care to dwell and I rode onward to Chiu-lien-cheng. Passing the base of the Conical Hill where the Russian guns fought so bravely on the previous day, and where the Russian General was mortally wounded, I came to the foot of the pass through which the enemy had retreated. Here along the base and slopes were the Russian sungars—very primitive in construction and affording no protection whatever against shell fire.

Chiu-lien-cheng is a very small village which owes its existence to its position on the Imperial Pekin Road. It consists of little more than a street of houses with stone walls and tiled roofs, yet you no sooner enter it from Korea than you breathe a cleaner and a freer atmosphere. The filth and lethargy of Korea are most oppressive, and after a few weeks experience of the people and their dwellings even China is a white man's Paradise.

Abandoned Russian Field Kitchen.

[*facing p.* 100

It was dark when we turned our backs upon Chiu-lien-cheng and set out for camp. The distance by way of the pontoons was ten miles, whereas it was little more than five if we crossed the islands direct. We decided to take the short cut, believing that the rivers in our line of march had been pontooned for the artillery that passed us on the way. At the first stream we found no bridge, but were directed to a ford by a soldier who kept watch by the bivouac fire on the bank of the river. For a hundred yards or so the water was shallow enough, but it grew deeper and deeper, until two of our horses were swimming and another was struggling on the edge of quicksand. There was nothing for it save to turn back and seek the aid of pontoon boats in which guns and horses were being transported. As we rode along the bank our horses shied at several dark objects on the sand. They were dead soldiers, who lay as they had fallen in the fight of that morning.

The boats took us to the other side, and we felt that our troubles were over. They had, however, only begun, for at the main stream, which is several feet in depth, and four hundred yards wide, there was no pontoon, and the boats were carrying soldiers. It looked as if we must retrace our steps or remain on the island all night. Long and diligent search was made for an officer who would give us authority to commandeer a boat, but none could be found. For an hour or more we stood helpless in the shadow of the temple, where a

sergeant was sorting official papers by the feeble light of a Chinese lantern. At last we determined to take a boat and row ourselves across. Our craft was made of two pontoon boats held together by a platform that gave room for four horses, and was propelled by heavy sculls. In due time, and without great difficulty, we landed half our party on the south island, and some rode away, leaving others to return for their comrades. I remained to take charge of the horses, and was looking anxiously over the dark river when two soldiers approached very cautiously, and with their rifles ready. Halting about twenty paces distant they spoke, but what they said I could not understand.

"*Akokojin*," I replied. "Englishman." Whereupon they came up and went through a little pantomine, which I have no doubt was intended to convince me that I had come very near being shot for a Cossack. With a soldier for guide we reached at last the bridge that spanned the south stream, and at four o'clock in the morning were in camp. It had taken twelve hours to get those messages censored, and they had still to be carried hundreds of miles on foot through Korea before they could arrive at a telegraph office.

Chapter XV

"THE PEACE OF THE EAST."

ANTUNG CITY.

WITHIN the limit of five degrees the earth offers no stranger contrasts than those of Japan, Korea, and China. The fairy who watched over the birth of Japan was of dainty form ; Korea had a slut for godmother, and China an opulent dame. Japan is a land for the poet who sings in dithyrambics ; Korea calls for the scavenger ; while China would gladden the eye of the farmer. But the contrast goes deeper than the soil. The people have differences more manifest. In Japan is a race new-born —a brave, hardy, energetic race, with the assurance and vanity of untried youth inspired with a boundless patriotism. Koreans walk their dung heaps in winding sheets like corpses looking for an undertaker. Life has gone out of them, and nothing remains save dirt and decay. Cross the Yalu and you have journeyed on the magic carpet so wonderful is the change. Here is a

fine, healthy, vigorous people, instead of a moribund; here industry takes the seat of lethargy; here is pride of race which awaits only the awakening voice of patriotism.

Strangers in all countries are apt to form hasty conclusions, and to pronounce very decided opinions on insecure basis. But war is a good crucible in which to sift all character. Its terrors and surprises; its privations and sacrifices bring into instant and bold relief the qualities of a people. You have not to grope for them in metaphysical darkness. They stand out before you by day in a pillar of cloud, and by night in a pillar of fire. The people of Manchuria, whether Manchu or Chinese, have proved themselves men. They are the victims of war who have not the satisfaction of shouldering a rifle; yet they stood firm and received the victor without cringing and the vanquished without insult.

When I rode into Antung two days after the passage of the Yalu the town had a holiday aspect. The streets were filled with people, above whose bare heads and black pigtails towered posts that looked like glorified Venetian masts. They are flat boards, thirty feet high, stained a dull black and covered with ideographs in relief. Near the top is a disc of tin that catches the rays of the sun and shines with the fierce light of the dragon's eye. The ideographs are in gold, and live and talk as only Chinese letters live and talk among all the written characters of the world. Standing in rows a few paces from the doors these glittering boards proclaim the merits

of Wang Fungtsao's merchandise and Yuan Siekai's skill as a builder of Pekin carts; but to the stranger they are more than sign posts; they are monuments the brilliance and magnificence of which are stars in the drab dulness of a Chinese town.

What brought the citizens into the streets? With eager outstretched faces they lined the high footway; their blue cotton garments and felt shoes filled the road, and on every intelligent yellow face was a look of earnest anticipation. Yet not a sound came from them. The mob divided, and there appeared the dark blue of Japanese soldiers. They marched with rifles shouldered, and their immobile faces actually betrayed excitement. The crowd opened, and behold a long dark line of men walking in couples—men of a different race, fair men with blue eyes and blonde moustache, wearing caps of Astrakan and dyed sheepskin. They had the erect, easy carriage of soldiers, and each man's earth-stained face wore the impress of his mood. The glance of the youth with the fierce moustache wandered over the crowd with haughty disdain; the man with the scar on his brow had his eyes in infinite space—he was seeing visions of vengeance—the comrade near him scowled under a blood-stained sheepskin; while the veteran behind accepted the fortune of war with easy indifference. A soldier in the hands of his enemies arouses a great compassion. He is the embodiment of helplessness and despair, to whom his bitterest foe will render aid and comfort. But a band of prisoners excite many emotions.

They have the semblance of strength and purpose strangely out of keeping with the idea of captivity. One wonders how they allowed themselves to be taken, and if they will not arise and burst their bonds. I would like to know what thoughts were passing through the minds of the Japanese soldiers who looked on. They must have been the thoughts of men vowed to death or victory, for every soldier of the Mikado is nurtured on the traditions of the Samurai, who counts life nothing if the cause be lost. The Chinese watched with eager curiosity the march of their late masters under a foreign guard. He does not love the Russian who stole his country, but with the Chinaman love of self is stronger than love of country; he is before all else an individualist, and knows not what a day may bring forth—it may be a Siberian guard or a Japanese procession. He prudently waits upon events which are his true master.

"The Peace of the East"—that is the literal meaning of Antung—was one of the immediate causes of the war. In accordance with commercial treaties concluded between China on the one part and Japan and the United States on the other, it was a treaty port open to foreign trade. Russia had another destiny in view for Antung, but the new diplomacy which ratifies and signs treaties with an electric pen that reaches on the instant across the world, proved too quick for the fate ordained in St. Petersburg, and "The Peace of the East" is still nominally an open port. An American Consul

had been appointed, and was reported to be on his way hither. Antung is situated on the right bank of the Yalu, about twenty miles from its mouth, in the province of Feng-t'ien. The approaches and estuary are not charted, but are well known to the masters of coasting vessels who make occasional visits in the Autumn to purchase raw silk and cocoons. Navigation is rendered difficult by shoals and sandbanks, yet junks can ascend the river for fifty miles, and the Japanese gunboats that bombarded the Russian position North-west of Antung have shown that a channel may be found for steamers of deeper draft than was generally supposed. A large number of junks are employed in the commerce of Antung which is considerable, the imports consisting of nankeens, oil, iron, and provisions ; while the exports are timber, planks, bean-cake—an excellent horse feed —liquorice, and "wild" silk.

Measured by our own standards Antung is not clean. The smells that rise up from unexpected places and assault you are occasionally alarming; dust and dirt affront you on all sides ; and the people are unwashed. Yet compared with most Chinese cities, Antung is a Dutch kitchen, and to step from Korea into Manchuria is to step out of a noisome swamp into a clear cool stream. The streets are fairly wide and the footpath, where it exists, is raised two or three feet above the road. The houses are one storied and are built of dark stone roofed with heavy tiles. At its best the town has a mean and dingy aspect, and does not improve on

closer acquaintance. When the Japanese entered, the streets looked like rows of poor shops with the shutters up, for Chinese doors are shutters, as you discover when in answer to knock and cry of "Kaimeni" the side of a house begins to come away in sections. Those of us who kept up with the advance were quartered upon a wealthy merchant at whose door stood one of the glorified sign posts. His house is a type of all well-to-do houses in Manchuria. On each side of the entrance hall is a large and lofty room with shelves along the walls, and at one end a broad platform covered with straw matting. These are the shops or warehouses. The shelves are empty, for everything has been removed and hidden until confidence has been restored by the proclamations which the Japanese make haste to post upon the walls calling upon the people to resume their ordinary pursuits and assuring them of protection to life and property. Between these two apartments the entrance hall leads direct into a courtyard, on one side of which are stables and piggeries, and on the other a row of small rooms used as dwellings. These rooms also have mat covered platforms which serve the purpose of beds and lounges and are lighted by windows of oil paper attached to moveable wooden frames. The floors are of beaten earth and the furniture consists of a table, a chair, one or two stools and a wooden bench. The ceiling has a picture paper and the blackened walls show traces of a paper of geometric design. Everything about the place is solid and substantial after the manner of things Chinese, but dirt and squalor prevail.

The Manchus having given the dynasty to the Empire claim the privilege of conquerors. They pay no taxes; the examinations that open the door to preferment are made easy for them; they draw pay and rations from the government and do no work. With such incentives, it is not surprising to find them indolent, ignorant and self-satisfied. They have lost all manly qualities except pride of race. A Manchu may condescend to marry a Chinese woman; but a Chinaman is not permitted to marry a Manchu woman though the Empress Dowager has issued an edict recommending such marriages. Between the Chinese, who call themselves Min-jen or civilians, and the Bannermen or Ch'i-jen, it is hard to detect any difference in dress or appearance. The Manchu women dress their hair differently and do not bind the feet of their daughters; although in order to imitate the tottering gait of their Chinese sisters they wear shoes with thick soles curved inward from toe to heel. But the Manchus are only a very small part of the population of Antung; their number throughout the Empire probably does not exceed three millions. It is the industrious Chinese or Min-jen who make the trade and commerce of this treaty port.

The Japanese troops had not been twenty-four hours in the town before it began to put off its impoverished look. Small and mysterious packages appeared on shelves that had gaped in emptiness: bean cake and chopped straw were dragged out from dark

corners: horses and mules and Pekin carts walked out of space: and that which seemed a famine-stricken and denuded city became a mart. The change was gradual, for the Chinese are suspicious and demanded proof of the good intentions of the new invaders. The vendor of sweet cakes and eggs and a vile concoction of alcohol and fusil oil was the first to hazard his wares, and the result must have been satisfactory, since the cashier presently took his seat at the desk in the warehouse, or large store, and goods were exchanged for military notes issued by the Japanese. These notes, by the way, were at first accepted with great reluctance, and at a discount of ten per cent., which made the purchaser anxious to avoid them: but confidence was soon restored and they were accepted at face value, though the cost of everything which was previously measured by the Mexican or silver dollar was fixed by the Japanese yen: in other words prices rose fifty per cent.

When you leave the dingy heart of the town and approach the river you realise that Antung is a place of considerable importance. The Yalu at this point is about a mile wide and the river front is crowded with junks—those square-built square-rigged boats that swarm over the Yellow Sea and are capable of sailing one hundred miles in six hours or in sixty. Many are engaged in trade with Yong-am-po, the head quarters of the Russian Far Eastern Timber and Mining Company, on the other side of the Yalu, while others run between Manchuria and Chinese and Japanese

ports. In the creeks are more junks building or being repaired, and on the banks are piles of timber and bean cake awaiting shipment. A busy and picturesque scene the river presents with its tangle of brown sails; its blue-gowned sailors; and its wooden ships with all their strength and grace of line.

After two nights I quitted the house of the merchant to make my abode in a temple on the outskirts of the town. The temple stands near the foot of a green hill, and is one of the richest in the Empire. Before its walls stretches a broad open space, in the centre of which is a stone building—an open-air theatre, with a beautiful roof decorated with dragons and bells that breathe sweet melodies to the gentle breeze. The theatre used for religious celebrations was closed. The outer wall of the temple is of stone, with a broad band of pink wash along the middle, and you reach the outer court through a circular gate. Flights of stone steps lead to a stone balcony, from which gates give access to smaller courtyards, on each side of which are spacious rooms that appear to have no sacredotal use, and are probably the apartments of the priests. The temple proper forms the outer wall of the square, and is separated into several shrines, each of which has its particular deity and images. The interiors of these shrines resemble Roman Catholic chapels in their elaborate decoration, their lamps and candles and their graven images. This temple, I was told, is dedicated to Taoism, which was imported from India long before the Christian era, and numbers its

votaries by millions. It is named the Temple of the River God, though all the gods and goddesses of Olmpus appear to be gathered under its roof. Here, in a shrine which the aged priest showed to me with conscious pride—an ornate and beautiful shrine—sits the god of war gorgeously apparelled, a pompous rather than terrifying figure, with full red cheeks, a straggling black beard and dark oblique eyes. In a neighbouring shrine images of goddesses, some of them carrying infants that might have been modelled from Italian masters. The priest exhibited these treasures with the languid air of one who took pity on the ignorant Western devil who had invaded these sacred precincts. He was a courteous old gentleman, wrapped up in that impenetrable conceit which protects China against the influence of the West.

I pitched my tent in the outer court, and woke every morning to a new admiration of the beauty and simplicity of the roof of the temple. It was a source of unending delight to the eye. The form, I am sure, is taken from the tent—that square tent of the nomad—for it falls in simple and graceful lines from the ridge pole, and is picked up at the corners as a dainty maid holds her skirts. Tiny dragons and devils sit upon the ribs and grin down from the eaves : they look as if they had just alighted and were about to take flight again. And the colour is splendid, with rich greys and deep browns above a border of crimson and gold.

One morning I was aroused by the droning of pipes, the clashing of cymbals, and the beating of a

drum. Looking out of my tent I saw three men in the outer court whose poor dress and unwashed faces led me to believe that they were itinerent musicians, of whom it was desirable to be rid by the present of a few cash. They were, however, the temple minstrels, and this was a feast day, for trooping through the gates came crowds of citizens of Antung, all clean and well dressed for the occasion. Some of them bore gifts of money: others of kind, such as pigs and wheat: but the majority were content with joss sticks. Entering the temple in small parties they spread carpets before the images and performed the rites of genuflection and raising of hands, precisely like the action of the Roman Catholic priest at the altar. Lighting their joss sticks they placed them in a box before the shrine and left them to pour incense of smoke, while some minor priest beat the tom-tom and clashed the cymbals to call the attention of the god to this act of worship. In the little courtyard before the shrine stood a stone lamp—a pillar of stone with a cavity on the top. To this lamp were attached long strings of crackers that produced much smoke and noise to the satisfaction of the multitude. The scene and the ceremony were familiar rather than strange, and carried my mind to the house on the hill where the Danish Lutheran missionary—the Rev. J. Vyff—preaches against an idolatry in which he recognises many points of close resemblance with the religions of the West.

Chapter XVI

THE MARCH INTO MANCHURIA.

FENG-HOANG-CHENG.

"THE merciful man has no enemies." This was the legend that met the eye of General Kuroki when he dismounted to receive the welcome of the Governor of Feng-hoang-cheng. Despite the cyclones of passion that sweep over this Empire the Chinese are no lovers of brute force. The Confucian doctrine of life which has dominated China for two thousand five hundred years does not tend to develop the aggressive virtues, and this legend, inscribed in crimson upon a scroll of white silk, represents the attitude of the Chinaman toward all matters that do not appear to touch his rights or his dignity. The Chinese are punctilious in the discharge of all the obligations of courtesy, and their greeting of the victorious soldier was marked with a kindliness, a dignity and an æsthetic taste of which I found evidences in every direction and among all

City Wall, Feng-Hoang-Cheng.

A Street Scene, Feng-Hoang-Cheng.

[*facing p* 114

classes. The scene was more strange than impressive. Upon the dusty plain, which stretches before the city down to the bank of the shallow river, was assembled a crowd of civilians and soldiers and officials. Under a rude pavilion, draped with crimson and adorned with the motto "The merciful man has no enemies," sat the Governors of the Province, the city and the garrison, with others who were in authority over the people. Their loose surcoats were of many colours—deep violet, and crimson and blue, and the sheen of their silken garments was lustrous in the brilliant sunshine. They sat by the roadside after the manner of the East. In the dark shadow of brick walls lounged soldiers whose dress differed little from that of the civilian—a loose robe of indigo blue and a pair of wide trousers ending in a pair of felt shoes.

The Manchu soldier is not a martial figure. He is without discipline or organisation, and in the guard of honour I noted that nearly every man had a different arm from his fellow; one an old carbine, another a muzzle loader, a third a Winchester, a fourth a Mauser. Moreover he is indolent and wanting in intelligence and is addicted to opium. There is a rule excluding opium smokers from the ranks, but you have only to look at officers and men to know that nine out of ten are victims to this destructive habit. Its calls are imperious and unless they are obeyed the men collapse. In the Japanese war, I am told, the Manchu troops halted to smoke, no matter how pressing the urgency. Near the river were

more soldiers and officers in scarlet surcoats, and straw hats shaped liked cones, that come well over the face. With these were the colours—great banners of white silk with crimson characters denoting the regiments. The Governor invited us to be seated in the pavilion, but we choose to mingle with the crowd, who greeted us with the word "Ingwa" or "Englishman." We were curiosities in their eyes—the Governor of the city afterwards told me that he had never seen an Englishman before—and our clothes were examined with interest.

Presently there was a movement in the ranks; the soldiers rose and left their shelter under the walls; the guard of honour stood at attention on each side of the road; the banners were unfurled; and four trumpeters in yellow jackets blew a fanfare. General Kuroki and his Staff appeared on the far bank of the river. As they rode through the shallow stream the banners waved; the trumpets sounded, and the guard presented arms. At the pavilion they dismounted and were received by the Chinese authorities, the Taotai or Intendent of the Eastern Marshes speaking a few words which, I was told, were distinguished by the grace and good breeding in which these people excel. Cards were exchanged—long strips of crimson paper with the names in black—and the General and his Staff were invited to enter the pavilion. General Kuroki offered the place of honour to Prince Kuni, but he refused to supercede the Commander-in-chief who accordingly seated himself in the centre of the bench at a table spread with sweet cakes.

Tea was served with due ceremony, and the General and his Staff rode away amid bows and music and waving of flags that set the horses prancing.

Feng-hoang-cheng is about thirty miles, or two two days' march from Antung. We left the treaty port on Wednesday the 11th, and halted for the night at Tang-chan-cheng which is midway on the Imperial Pekin Road. Crossing the ridge that forms the Northern boundary of the river Yalu, we descended into a broad valley shut in by mountains. The land is rich and well cultivated, and on every side were the charred ruins of substantial homesteads. The Russians in their retreat had set fire to every building and but for their haste would have given Antung to the flames. This destruction of private property was wanton and senseless and had not even the pretext of being directed against combatants. In this two days' journey I saw more ruined houses than in six months' trek in the Transvaal, and I wondered if the Continent of Europe would be as deeply agitated over these acts of war against a harmless and peaceful peasantry as they were over the firing of houses used as trenches with the white flag over them. Away to the East of this desolated valley rose a range of hills dominated by a mountain that springs from the plain like a huge knife with the edge of the blade toward the sky. The summit is sharp and precipitous and the slopes are dark and rugged. It was near this razor-like ridge that the Russian guns were lost and a regiment was decimated.

It is said that the Chinese care nothing for the provinces of Manchuria. They form no part of the Eighteen Provinces which fill the Chinaman's conception of his native land, though they gave birth to the ruling dynasty. This indifference may be real and may account for the ease with which the Russians have overrun the country: yet Manchuria is a land worth fighting for. It covers an area of 336,000 square miles: it produces grain of all kinds, vegetables in plenty, tobacco, hemp, indigo, and opium; silk culture flourishes in the South: the forests and mountains supply skins, furs, and timber: on the Eastern steppes sheep, cattle, and horses are reared in inexhaustible numbers: gold is found in the North and along the Eastern frontier to the Upper Sungari in the South: the climate is good, though somewhat rigorous: and the inhabitants are a fine, hardy, industrious people, much more friendly toward foreigners than the people of China proper. And it is a beautiful country, with rich valleys, clear streams, and mountains clothed with forests of pine and oak. Our camp at Tan-chan-cheng was pitched in an orchard, and pear blossoms fell upon our tents like flakes of snow. The homestead was foul and neglected: the farmer and his family were dirty and indifferent to comfort, yet the fields were carefully cultivated and there were evidences of abundant prosperity.

Next morning we resumed our march along the bank of an affluent of the river Tsao, which stream

the Imperial Pekin Road follows northward to the Mou-tien-ling pass. The country is mountainous and the river winds among hills clothed with emerald green woods. A plain brought us to Kao-li-men, where the mountains converge to form a broad pass guarded by a conical hill. Kao-li-men is known as the Gate of Korea and through this pass ran the willow palisade which marked the Chinese possessions in Manchuria when the Ming dynasty occupied the throne.

This palisade, which for two hundred and ninety miles is still the frontier of Manchuria, enclosed the fringe of the Western coast of the Gulf of Liao-tung, and the valley of the Lower Liao river, reaching its most Northerly point at Wei-yuan-pu-men, eighty miles to the North of Mukden, on the Imperial Pekin Road. Bending South-east and South from this gate the palisade ran through Kao-li-men and rested its flank on the Yellow Sea. The country within the pale was formerly known as Liao-tung and Liao-hsi, that is, the territory East and West of the Liao river. I am told that the gates and traces of the fence exist to this day, but I looked in vain. The only evidence I could discover was in the termination of the name Kao-li-men, for "men" means "gate." Outside the pale, inhabiting the mountains and forests, were clans, half Mongol, half Tungusian—a race of mighty hunters who lived by the chase. As many of the names of places show, a great part of the Southern province of Manchuria was at one time Korean.

When we crossed the Yalu there was a report that the Russians would make a determined stand at Kao-li-men. The country is well adapted to defensive tactics. An enemy advancing from the South must pass over open ground and through defiles commanded on both sides by hills, and the approach to the Gate of Korea is dominated by a semi-circular range. The strategic weakness of the position—like that held by the Russians on the Yalu—was the want of lateral lines of communication, and the fact that the Pekin Road, which is the only communication to the North, is open to flank attack. However, it was clear that the Russians had contemplated holding this pass. The roads in the neighbourhood of Kao-li-men were entrenched, and the trenches were deep and better made than the primitive death traps on the Yalu. But they had evidently changed their minds and fallen back upon Liao-yang, a position of greater strength and strategic importance. Our progress to Feng-hoang-cheng was accordingly uninterrupted, and we rode leisurely along the bank of the river, over cultivated plains and in the shadow of green hills.

Feng-hoang-cheng is situated on the plain in the apex of an angle of hills, one side of which extends towards Antung and the other South-west in the direction of Ta-kou-chan. It is the only town on the Pekin Road between Liao-yang and the coast, and has a population of twenty thousand peasants and small traders. Like most Chinese towns, Feng-hoang-cheng consists of

compact rows of one-storied houses and shops with tiled roofs. The streets are unpaved and fairly wide, and the general aspect is dingy and poor. At the Northern end of the town, where the hills begin to converge, is a walled enclosure three or four hundred yards square, within which dwell the Governor and officials—a small village, shut in by brick walls eighteen feet high and three feet in thickness. No architectural feature relieves the dull level of one-storied buildings, and no touch of colour stands out of the drab dinginess.

The Intendent of the Eastern Marshes is a man of consequence. He is responsible for the administration of one of the three Provinces that occupy the North-east corner of the Chinese Empire. His capital is Feng-hoang-cheng—a city with a record of two thousand years—and his province of Feng-tien has an area of fifty-five thousand square miles. The importance of this district is to be measured at the moment not by its extent or by the undoubted richness of its soil but by its position on the map. Feng-t'ien borders on Korea, on the Yellow Sea and on the Gulf of Liao-tung. It was, therefore, in the heart of the war and among its mountains and valleys would be determined the fate of Manchuria.

Before I called upon the Intendent I learned a few elementary facts of the elaborate system of the Chinese civil service with its checks and balances. There are three Governors in this Province, and though their authority and duties differ, each exercises a moderating

influence on the other. The Military Governor is, of course, a Manchu, and commands the Manchu soldiers or bannermen, of whom nearly eighteen thousand are stationed in the province, four thousand six hundred being "foreign" drilled.

Being of the race from which sprang the ancestors of the reigning dynasty the Military Governor ranks first in the administrative hierarchy. His powers, however, are limited, and he serves only as a visible sign of the predominance of the Manchu race. After him ranks the Taotai, known as Tung-pien-tao, or Intendent of the Marshes, whose authority is wider and more real, and under him again is the Governor of the City with duties more defined and circumscribed. When he is master in his own house the Intendent lives within the citadel or walled enclosure. The necessities of General Kuroki's Staff have banished him for a time beyond these brick walls, which have only the semblance of strength, despite their iron crusted doors and deep gates.

In a dusty forecourt, the entrance to which was guarded by a Japanese sentry, was a stand of colours denoting the presence of the Governor of the Province. Passing through a small apartment draped with crimson cloth I came to an inner court and the seat of justice. Here, in a crimson-draped alcove were a crimson chair and table. Upon the table were several narrow wooden boxes, in which stood wooden labels inscribed in Chinese characters, and at one end encased in yellow cloth was something that looked like a triple crown. The labels

were tablets stating the nature of the punishment inflicted on criminals—a space being left for the judge to write the number of strokes or other directions—and the crown was a casket containing the official seals. While these mysteries were being explained for my instruction, the Governor appeared and invited me to enter a room adjoining the seat of justice.

Chang-shi-lam is a man of commanding presence, tall and graceful of figure in his robes of black silk, with a face of the keenest intelligence—strong, mobile, and pleasant to look upon. Dressed in European clothes he might easily have passed for a well-bred and cultured Englishman. He received me with a smile, and we took our seats at a round table, over which hung a cheap paraffin lamp of European or American ugliness, and on which were cigars and cigarettes of Japanese make. Conversation was difficult, for it had to be conducted through two interpreters—first into Japanese, and then into English—but so keen and responsive was Chang-shi-lam that after the usual compliments we found ourselves engaged in most animated talk. The face of the Governor was as expressive as that of an accomplished actor, and his dark eyes lighted up with eloquence as he spoke of the war and the condition of his people. Twenty years ago Chang-shi-lam was appointed Governor of this province, but in the interval he has filled other offices, and had returned to Feng-hoang-cheng only within the last six months. He is evidently a man in whom the Central Government have confidence, for they

have placed him in a very difficult and delicate position. I began by speaking of the satisfaction it must give him to see the people ploughing the land and conducting themselves as if war was far removed from the province.

"Yes," he replied, "the attitude of the people toward the Japanese is altogether different. The Russians took our goods, our horses and our mules, paying nothing for them or only half the price at which they were valued. It may be that the needs of the two armies are different, but at least the Japanese pay for what they take and leave us the means of ploughing the land."

The Governor spoke without bitterness, ascribing this difference in treatment to the pressing needs of the Russian army. I asked if they had done much damage to the town.

"No," was the answer. "Before they retired they wanted to set fire to the stores, but the people implored them to spare the buildings and undertook to bring out the stores so that they might be destroyed. While this work was in progress report came that the Japanese were at hand and the Russians fled, leaving behind many things, including winter clothing and ammunition."

"How long was the column that passed through here after the passage of the Yalu?"

"The head of the retreating army entered the town at four o'clock in the afternoon and marched

without a break until three o'clock on the following afternoon. A few hundred stayed behind to destroy the stores but went away very quickly."

From the war we passed to the history of the city.

"Its records go back two thousand years," said the Governor. "In those days the country hereabout formed part of Korea, as many of the names indicate. There is a tradition that Feng-hoang-cheng once sheltered a Chinese Emperor, but it is only a tradition. If you go into the hills, however, you will find many tablets of stone recording the visits of men famous in letters and in war. The country is very beautiful though it contains few things that would interest the archæologist beyond the traces of the willow palisade."

I spoke of the condition of the people.

"They are very poor and very ignorant," replied Chang-shi-lam. "Few of them would know what that is"—taking up a box of matches from the table—"and they would not know what to do with these"—pointing to the cigarettes and cigars. "Beyond tilling the ground they have no industries, unless you take into account the culture of wild silk. When I was Governor here twenty years ago I encouraged the people to go into the hills and cultivate the 'wild' silk. It is now worth from twenty to thirty thousand pounds a year, and brings us into trading relations with the port of Antung."

"And your people," I asked, "are they well-behaved? Have you many offenders to receive the punishment written on the tablets?"

The answer may appear strange, yet it reveals the attitude of the Chinese toward Western civilisation, and shows their supreme contempt for our commercial ideals. The Chinese recognise four grades in the social scale—scholars, farmers, labourers and merchants, and it was in this order that the Governor spoke of the conduct of the people.

"Our farmers give no trouble; they are content with tilling the soil and reaping the harvest. The labourers have employment, and are satisfied with little. We have some small traders and shopkeepers, but we have few serious offences to punish."

There, I believe, you have the real opinion of the Chinese official on the subject of trade. The "shang," or merchant, as in Japan, is at the very bottom of the social scale—a parasite, who adds nothing to the common wealth, but exists on the labour and needs of others. I was the more surprised to have this quick revelation from a man of the character and intellect of the Intendent of the Eastern Marshes, because when in acknowledgment of his courtesy I offered to submit myself to cross-examination, he spoke eloquently of the wide difference between European and Chinese civilisation.

"It is twenty years," he said, "since I spoke with an Englishman in Feng-hoang-cheng, and I have never been beyond the borders of China. I have, however, read the diaries of many of my friends who have visited England, and I am aware how far in advance is the civilisation of Europe. I hope that in time we may

make some progress in the same direction. We entertain for England and her people sentiments of gratitude and friendship. The English were the first to establish schools in Pekin, and to teach us something of Western thought and achievement. They taught us also how to regulate our trade and how to collect our Custom dues; and we learned from them something of the training of soldiers. We have tried to imitate you, but we are still far behind, though not without hope."

I am aware that language of this kind on the lips of an Oriental is nothing more than the compliment which good breeding dictates; but Chang-shi-lam spoke with such convincing earnestness, his face was so instinct with intelligence, and his eyes had such a look of mournful contemplation that I am disposed to count him among those progressive Chinamen who are not wrapped up in that impenetrable conceit which excludes the very notion of reform. In reply to his compliments I observed that we must become even better friends as our civilisation grew more alike, though we could not but venerate a civilisation which had given Confucius to the world, and had produced so many men of learning. Before taking leave of the Governor I expressed the hope that he and his people would soon be able to live in peace.

"Yes," he answered, "I hope the contest will end quickly, and that the fate of Manchuria will be determined once for all."

The Governor rose and escorted me to the outer court through a group of retainers, whose faces had

crowded the doorway during our interview, and who had busied themselves by filling the teacups. As I was saying Good-bye this courtly and distinguished-looking gentleman betrayed the first sign of curiosity. He took my Panama hat and examined it with eyes and fingers expressing wonder that straw or fibre could be woven so fine. But for that little lapse I might have felt that I was taking leave of a cardinal in the Vatican or some priestly chancellor in the mediæval days.

Chapter XVII

THE SOLDIER AND HIS WAR SONGS.

THE tidal wave of war that swept us over the Yalu left us stranded on a hill side in Manchuria. Upon the slope of the hill was outspread a forest of green boughs, in the shade of which we pitched our tents and awaited the next move in the big game. It was a sequestered nook, where the moist earth feeds a plenteous crop of weeds and clothes with verdure the tiny mounds under which generations of Manchus sleep the sleep that knows not waking. Among the silent memorials of the dead we made bowers of pine branch and oak leaf, and wreathed them with snowy hawthorn and scented lilac. At dewy dawn we woke to the song of thrush and call of cuckoo, and at nightfall we were lulled to sleep by the breath of the wind sighing through the woods like the murmur of the lonely sea. From our cool covert we looked upon a valley embraced by copse-clad hills and a mountain that towers like a bastion above the plain. Feng-hoang—"Phœnix"—is the name of the mountain and fits it well, for this sheer rock with

furrowed face and razor crest was born of fire. Along the valley winds the river—a strand of blue in a web of brown and gold. It was a scene of vernal loveliness. When the sun flooded valley and hill with gold, the brown earth turned to deep amber, and the groves shone like emeralds. Under the lambent moon the landscape was a silver shield embossed with hills and dark tree tops and a mountain seamed with black ravines. But it was in storm that the scene was grandest. Then the riven clouds dyed the valley and slopes with deep shades of amber and brown, and the hills were veiled with mist like white robed giants lifting proud heads into infinite space.

In the shadow of our sylvan retreat stands a temple —a low roofed building without size or distinction, dedicated to the worship of Buddha—and across the plain rise the crenelated walls of the city. The husbandman was at work in the valley turning over the rich brown soil with a primitive plough drawn by ox and mule yoked together or sowing the furrows with millet dropped from a wooden scoop and trodden into the soil by the foot of one who comes after. Patches of vivid green showed where the seed had already begun to sprout, and where in a few weeks would arise a forest of tangled corn twelve feet high, through which Cossack and cavalry might strive in vain.

The sounds that reached us were few. Twice a day the bronze bell of the temple summoned us to share our meals with the flies in the squalid courtyard. Now and

again the stillness of the night was broken by a rifle shot, and you dreamed of Cossacks and Chinese bandits until you woke to remembrance of the sentries posted on the edge of the wood, along the hill tops, and at the bridge which leads Northward to Liao-yang and Mukden. Or it might be that when you were seated round the camp fire watching the pine branches change into livid tongues of flame, and the pine cones grow into crimson chrysanthemum there came through the darkness a strange and startling melody. At first a faint murmur like the rustling of leaves in the forest, it grew louder and stronger till you heard the deep roar of an army on the march, mingling with the shock of arms and the shout of battle.

The Japanese soldiers were singing their war song. Now, since the olden days when men held that the two things worth doing in this world were fighting and love making, poetry has busied itself with war. Our fathers fought and sang of fighting, both in admirable fashion, and many of our songs are instinct with the joy of battle. What poetry stirs the blood like Drayton's "Agincourt" with the dash and rush of its metre like the charge of a light brigade, or "The battle of the Baltic" with the concerted music of its rolling rhythm, or that lofty, insolent, passionate song of Sir Francis Doyle, "Red Thread of Honour?" The true test of a war song is the power of exciting the combative spirit and judged by that standard, the songs of the Japanese are worthy of a place in the anthology of war. The sentiments, I

confess, seem to me political rather than martial—more suited to a leading article than to the battle field. The words in the literal translation have none of the real *Berserkgang* for which we look in battle poems, and I am driven to the belief that, like the *Marseillaise*, the favourite song of the Japanese owes its power to stir the blood to the remarkable way in which it marries itself to a magnificent tune. General Sir Ian Hamilton has made skilful use of the material in the following rendering, which he was good enough to make at my request :—

Sons of Nippon, down with Russia!
Lawless Empire—lay her low
Faith and Justice she despises,
Russia is our mortal foe.

Even kindred foreign nations
Hate and scorn the Russian brood:
Like a wild insatiate wolf-pack
Ravening, they seek their food.

Fair Manchuria's triple province
Scarce devoured, ere the band
Lick their blood-stained lips and fasten
On Korea—hapless land

Who, unblushing, urged "for peace sake
Render back the Liao-Tung?"
Scarce had ink dried on the parchment
Than another song was sung.

Shameless trampling down the treaty,
Grasping countries far and wide,
All the world turned against her
For her lawlessness and pride.

Comrades, can we live oblivious
Of the blood of comrades slain
Ten years since? Oh, Powers Eternal,
Did their life blood flow in vain!

There must be some end to evil
Even in our life's short span,
That time is now—for we are marching
Down with Russia—on Japan!

Tell us not of Russia's vastness—
Vast—may be—but poor and wild:
Boast not of her swarming millions
What are swarms unless combined?

Thousands starving: traitors lurking:
Coffers empty: lack of grain.
How shall Russia stand against us,
Stand the long and weary strain?

But our own dear, precious country
'Neath its Emperor can combine:
For one thousand years successive
Reigns that same immortal line.

We are true and we are loyal.
"Roshia," as its letters say, *
"Dew," that in the morning sunlight
From the sword blade fades away.

March then with our sunlight banner
Waving proudly in the van:
March beneath that glorious emblem.
Down with Russia—on Japan!

* The Japanese character for "dew" and "Russia" is identical.

It was pleasant to live on the hillside instead of in the town. The freshness of heaven was above us: green trees were about us, and we felt less the restraint put upon us, for this valley was our prison. The river was our boundary on the North and East: the mountain shut out the South, and beyond the Western heights we might not go. The order had gone forth and we must not ask wherefor. Such was the fog of secrecy in which the Japanese strove to hide their every movement. In this quality of secretiveness they are the most Oriental of people, and observe in all things the letter of the injunction, "Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth."

Within these bounds we were free to come and go, unless some too zealous sentry determined otherwise. It was a new sensation this enforced confinement, but we shared it with the military *attachés* of the foreign Powers, and therefore could not complain of unequal treatment.

Chapter XVIII

IN MEMORY OF THE DEAD.

A SHINTO SERVICE.

The priest stood on the mountain facing the multitude. In his uplifted hand was a pine branch hung with strips of white paper—emblems of the soul's purity. Swish! Swish! Swish! Thrice the branch swept the air above the bowed heads in the plain below. The simplicity of this act of purification, the silence of the vast congregation, the beauty of the scene—all combined to fill with awe and reverence the alien spectator as well as the native worshipper. It has been my lot to attend many services on the field of battle. I have knelt with soldiers in the desert strewn with ten thousand dead outside the grey walls of Omdurman; I have heard the song of thanksgiving echo among the ruins of Khartoum over which hovered the Shade of Gordon; and under a shell-swept hill in Ladysmith I have joined in the prayer of a besieged garrison. These are

memories that can never fade. Nor will there pass out of remembrance the scene of that day when an army assembled among the mountains of Manchuria to do honour to its dead.

No temple raised by human hands could be so majestic and so inspiring as this valley edged round with purple hills and the deep blue of heaven above. The walls of the tabernacle were flowing contours of nearer hills clothed with pine trees and the shelving side of Mount Phœnix seamed with dark coombs in which nestle shrines and sepulchral mounds. Old marbles, ever beautiful, were never so rich and rare as this carpet of brown and green and gold woven by field and grove and river. Through every shade and tint they ran—from nutbrown to russet and auburn, from verd antique to emerald and the tender green of young corn; from orange to saffron and amber and burnished gold—all blended in one splendid polychrome. Upon this spacious floor stood the soldiers—eight thousand or more. They were men of the Second Division. On the right were three regiments of infantry in brigade formation; a regiment of cavalry was mounted between them and the artillery, who were without their guns, and on the left stood the engineers and train battalions. The long lines of khaki looked like a border of old gold in a gorgeous prayer mat spread before an altar raised upon the heights.

Afar off on a lofty terrace in the shadow of a green bluff the priests had built their sanctuary—an oblong

enclosure marked by banners. The entrance was a gate of two slender tree stems with a crossbar from which hung two flags—white with a red sun in the centre—emblems of Empire and of the Sun Goddess, from whom sprang the long line of Mikados who have ruled Japan. On the right front of the enclosure floated a black banner and on the left front a yellow, symbolising victory and the return home.

At regular intervals were flags of white, blue, yellow, black, and red. Each colour has its meaning, though what it is must remain the subject of controversy. Some maintain that these primary colours represent five elements—earth, air, water, fire, and death: others contend that they are emblems of the four seasons and of the end of all things: some hold that yellow signifies the earth, blue the East, red the South, white the West, and black the North: others will urge that blue symbolises the beginning of life, red prosperity, white perfection, yellow the earth, and black death. That they have meaning is certain, though, like much of the ritual of Shinto and Buddha, it is lost in the mist of ages.

At the back of the enclosure was the inner sanctuary, formed by four poles hung with rope, from which were suspended narrow strips of white paper known as "go-hei," emblems of purity and resting places for the souls of the departed. The altar was a table spread with a white cloth upon which rested a mirror—symbol of perfection borrowed from the

Shingon sect of Buddhists. On each side stood an earthen pot from which rose great paper flowers, red and white and blue, and before the altar was a small table with a porcelain bowl that held a large pine branch hung with strips of white paper. At the back of this inner sanctuary rose a tablet of plain white wood bearing in Chinese characters the legend: "To the memory of the souls of the departed." Close by stood a wooden pail with a wooden dipper, decorated with "go-hei," to perform the ceremony of lustration before prayer, and, at a short distance on the right, was a small screened enclosure where the offerings were laid. And about the shrine stood white covered trays and baskets, laden with sacrificial gifts for the solace of the *manes*—heaps of radishes, piles of rice cake, bottles of beer, flasks of saki, or rice spirit, fish, and fowl—the fruits of the earth and of the waters thereof.

To understand the ceremony it may be necessary to say something about Shintoism. Whatever the country of its origin there can be little doubt that in growth and development Shinto is a genuine product of Japanese soil. The nature worship, which is a distinct part of its doctrine, was probably inherited from the Ainu who first inhabited the island, while the worship of heroes and ancestors was imported, like Buddhism, from the mainland of Asia. The Pantheon of Shinto is crowded with a host of deities; every stream, every mountain, every tree has its god or goddess; and every hero and every ancestor has its place in Shinto theocracy. Yet it is a

religion only in name, for the Kannuski, or priests, have no code of ethics and no doctrine of the destiny of man. They teach no moral duty save that of obedience to natural impulses and to the dictates of the Mikado. Their prayers are invocations to the spirits of the dead, and their sermons are formal addresses, partly eulogies, partly petitions, composed in a language of a remote period not comprehended by the common people. Shinto, in short, is but a shadowy cult of ghosts accompanied with sacrificial rites, and demands of its disciples little more than a visit to some local temple at an annual festival. Its creed may be summed up in two sentences: belief in the continued existence of the dead—whether in a condition of joy or pain is not revealed: and belief in the divine origin and divine right of the Mikado. Its ritual is distinguished by severe simplicity; its temples contain no idols; its priests wear no splended garments; the only incentives to worship are the mirror which symbolises perfection and the white strips of paper which signify purity. Despite the absence of inspiration, of a code of morals and of a theory of destiny—the essentials of all religions—Shinto is still the national religion of Japan, and every Japanese from his birth is placed under the protection of some Shinto deity.

The bugles sounded the general salute, and the shrill notes lingered in the sun-lit air like dying peals of thunder as the solid lines of khaki in the plain below came to attention. The ceremony had begun. On the left of the sanctuary were arranged the officers of the

First Army—Major General Matsunaga, Major General Okaziki, Major General Shibuya, and Major General Kodama—not the assistant chief of the General Staff—with General Nishi, commander of the Second Division, at their head. In this group were the foreign *attachés*, General Sir Ian Hamilton and Colonel Hume having the places of honour. On the opposite side stood three priests.

In ordinary times the Kannuski are not distinguishable from laymen, but on this day they wore their sacerdotal robes—long loose gowns with wide sleeves girdled at the waist. Upon their heads were black hats shaped like the biretta with a widow's cap and strings at the back. The high priest—an old and bearded man of solemn and dignified bearing, who looked more like a Parsee than a Japanese—wore a sword in a velvet scabbard, and his gown was of red and black silk, closely resembling the old-fashioned dimity. The gowns of his assistants were of drab-watered silk, worn over regulation khaki trousers and regulation army boots that compelled one to the conclusion that they were private soldiers clothed for the nonce with priestly authority. Advancing toward the altar, the priests stood before the shrine, clapped their hands three times, placed them reverently together, bowed their heads, and uttered the invocation to the dead. It was an invitation to the souls of the departed to rest upon the white strips of paper, or "go-hei." Returning to their original places, one of the junior priests took from the table in front of the

altar the branch of pine. Raising it aloft in his right hand he waved the branch over the heads of his fellow priests, over the officers and *attachés*, and over the offerings prepared in the little enclosed space. Then, moving to the front of the sanctuary until he stood on the edge of the terrace, he swept the air thrice over the heads of the multitude far below. This was the act of purification in which the pine, or ever-green, signifies sincerity.

The High Priest thereupon drew near to the altar, and bowing before it took from his breast a scroll from which he recited in murmuring tones these words :

"I, Hirokage Shimizu, Shinto priest, reverently speak to the souls of Lieutenant Jiro Takuma and other officers and soldiers who died in the battle of the Yalu and elsewhere, inviting them to approach the altar which we have erected at the foot of Mount Teisen beyond the walls of Feng-hoang-cheng. When friendly ties were broken and we came to the Russians with weapons in our hands, you joined the Second Division and marched to the front with the First Army, knowing that this was the hour of sacrifice and of duty. Bravely did you endure hardship and privation on sea and land, on mountain and in valley. But for you the fight did not end there. On the first day in May you came to the Yalu where the enemy had all the great advantages that nature had bestowed on such a position. Here you fought with admirable courage amid hail of bullet

and flash of bayonet. Some of you did excellent service in the work of reconnaissance, of road and bridge building and of transport. All of you helped to achieve that brilliant victory which has added lustre to the Empire and renown to the Army. Here in the citadel of Feng-hoang-cheng we have some leisure and would willingly tell again the story of that battle and talk over the future—but, alas, you are separated from us by the dark veil of death. Alas! we can neither see your brave faces nor hear your cheerful voices. Deeply do we feel this separation—we who in brotherly love shared with you the hardships and privations of the campaign. His Majesty, the Emperor, pleased with your victory, has proclaimed his recognition of your services; your countrymen applaud your courage and loyalty. Your merit is loftier than Mount Phœnix; your fame is brighter than the waters of the Yalu. More than worldly honour have you won. Your spirits will be forever with the gods who guard the Empire, and your name will be cherished as an example of loyalty. Who could withhold his respect; who would venture to disregard your services. The General who commands this Division and we also pay respect to your loyal souls by this memorial service held on the fiftieth day after the battle of the Yalu, and by offerings of sacred wine and meats. Humbly and reverently do we serve you with the rest of your comrades. We pray you to accept our services and the offerings laid upon the altar."

This allocution ended, the High Priest stood near the shrine with face turned toward the East, while one of his assistants received from the hands of a soldier offerings to the dead. These sacrifices represent the chief substances of human food—rice, wine, fish, fowl, vegetables, natural sweets, such as fruit, artificial sweets, such as cakes, and water and salt. Each offering rested on a ceremonial tray or tiny table covered with white paper and was reverently handed to the High Priest who placed it upon the altar. For a moment the ceremony was interrupted while General Nishi descended the slope to escort Prince Kunni to his place at the head of the officers. His Royal Highness was attended by General Fujii, Chief of the Staff, and Colonel Hagino.

At the invitation of the High Priest, General Nishi stepped up to the altar, saluted and opening out a scroll read this eulogy to the dead :—

"We meet on this sacred spot outside the walls of Feng-haong-cheng on the 19th day of June on the 37th year of Meiji to do honour to the memory of brave men, officers and soldiers—one hundred and fourteen in number—who belonged to the Second Division and died in the service of their country. You, brave dead, bade adieu to your native land on the 1st day in March, and took part in the memorable attack on Chiu-lien-cheng on May 1st, having reached the banks of the Yalu in face of privations and hardships. This our first battle was destined to test before the eyes of the world the merits of our army, and to influence the spirit

of our soldiers. Japanese courage, as the proverb says, never fails till death has conquered it. The whole world knows how we stood to the proof. Our enemy's defences, strengthened by nature and art, were easily won. Thus has the glory of Japan been heightened and the prowess of our soldiers has been sharpened. Most of you fell on that memorable day. Even now we have before our minds the picture of your gallantry. Some few died in skirmishes that followed; and many have fallen a prey to disease which pays no respect to meritorious deeds. Our hearts bleed at the thought of your brave and noble deeds. Rest in peace, precious souls! Be comforted by the sweet consciousness that your brilliant exploits will be blazoned in letters of gold on the page of history, and that your grand example of self-sacrifice will be handed down from generation to generation. Our situation at the front renders it impossible for us to make fit preparation for such a celebration. Our offerings are small, but we commend our praise and gratitude to the consecrated memory of the dead."

Again the bugles rang out filling the valley with the inspiring music of the anthem "Save our Country"; rifles rattled to the salute and the army below stirred into life. It was the end. Sharp words of command followed the notes of the bugle and the troops marched away to their appointed places at the outposts and lines of defence. Meanwhile the officers were laying upon the altar the last tribute of respect to the *manes* of their

comrades. Upon a table near the shrine there were many small branches of pine to each of which was attached a strip of white paper. General Nishi strode forward and receiving one of these branches saluted the altar and laid upon it this emblem of sincerity and purity. Prince Kunni followed with other officers and the foreign *attachés*, each of whom paid this tribute to the men who had fallen in battle.

Chapter XIX

A BUDDHIST CEREMONY.

When the priest of Shinto had bowed before the shrine and the last offering had been made, the soldiers marched away. But the service for the dead was not ended. Out of the little sacristy came a priest in robes of shimmering silk, and placed upon the altar flowers and a censer. The pine branches were removed, and, behold, the sanctury of the Sun Goddess became the shrine of Buddha. There was a time within the memory of men still young when they were worshipped in the same temple, for the Chinese missionaries who entered Japan in the Sixth Century accepted the Shinto deities as avatars or incarnations of Buddha, and the two faiths were so fused that the number of pure Shintoists and pure Buddhists was very small. By its doctrine and by its ritual Buddhism appeals to the heart and conscience, and for many generations it was the popular religion. But with the restoration of the Emperor the position was changed. If Japan had to adopt a foreign civilisation, she had, at any rate, a religion that was indigenous, and suited to the political conditions of the moment.

Shinto proclaimed the divine origin of the Emperor, and its doctrine was implicit obedience to his decrees. Therefore, Shinto was made the national religion, and the temples were cleansed of idols and incense and gorgeous vestments.

The priest gave no heed to the soldiers, who moved away company after company, and squadron after squadron, until there remained near the sanctuary only the officers of the staff and the foreign *attachés*. The Shinto priests stood on the right of the altar, silent and reverent spectators. Making obeisance to the shrine the priest recited the prayer invoking the presence of Buddha, while an assistant, who acted as precentor, muttered the responses. Then the priest drew near to the altar, and, taking in the fingers of his right hand some fragments of incense, dropped them into the censer, out of which arose a tiny cloud of white vapour. Thrice he made this offering, and, retiring three steps, took from the folds of his green and purple silk robes a scroll, from which he read :—

"On this the 19th day of June, in the 37th year of the Meiji, I, Nagao Reirzu, a Priest of Buddha, despatched by the Central Homgwanji (Temple) and attached to the Second Division of the First Japanese Army, set up a shrine at the foot of Mount Teisan, outside the walls of Feng-hoang-cheng, invoking the presence of Buddha and offering incense and flowers in order that he may comfort the noble spirits of the loyal and gallant soldiers who fell in the battle of the Yalu.

His Imperial Majesty, our august sovereign, has sought peace by every art of civilisation and has striven to cultivate the friendship of civilised nations since the early days of the Meiji era. His efforts have been especially directed to securing the peace and happiness of the East by guiding and aiding the countries of China and Korea. But Russia, insolent and ravenous, taking advantage of the weak and defying the strong, has trampled justice under foot and has departed from righteousness. To gratify her greed for territory her troops have overflowed the plains of Manchuria and Korea. The sins of Russia have offended Buddha and the gods and have caused our sovereign to issue his Imperial decree proclaiming war. Thus we come to cross swords with her. You, precious souls, bore many hardships and privations after leaving your native land. Difficulties of every kind confronted you. Yet amidst these trials you did your duty and won the admiration of all who were witnesses of your noble sacrifice. At last the moment came for the clash of arms. Shielded behind defences strengthened by nature and art, the enemy confronted you. Without hesitation you braved the dangers of shot and shell and charged onward against lines of bayonets until the enemy's forts were captured and Chiu-lien-cheng was won—thereby achieving an unparalleled feat of arms in the eyes of the world. Such brilliant exploits are to be ascribed chiefly to the virtues and grace of his Imperial Majesty, but your strength and your self-sacrifice in the interests of your

country did much toward securing the victory. Alas! you have fallen in battle: shot and shell did not spare you because of these noble qualities. When my thoughts turn to the field of that great fight my flesh burns and my senses grow faint. But man is mortal: the living shall die: those who meet shall part: such is the law of life. Who can escape the clutches of death: death steals into every man's home. But you leave behind you a name that shall be a glory to your parents. You are good sons and brave men whose dauntless deeds will inspire with a strong sense of loyalty all who read the story of your death. Noble men and gallant soldiers! The destiny of a nation rested upon your shoulders. You knew how to die: you have done your duty as loyal subjects and dutiful sons and have manifested that spirit of self-sacrifice and of unflinching bravery which are among the beautiful traits of the Japanese character. Your deeds shall be an example to generations to come. Your name shall ring through the groves of time as long as the waters of the Yalu flow toward eternity. Your fame will never die: it will be eternal as the snow on the summit of Fujiyama. This knowledge will console you for the sacrifice you have made for your native land. In our Buddhist philosophy loyalty, truth, filial love and fraternity are counted chief among the graces and the root of all god-like work. By sincerity one may enter the temple of stoicism and by love one may dwell in the realm of perpetual peace. These are the workings of the natural

law. From the secular point of view your death was noble: from the philosophic point of view it was grand. I recite the sublime words of Buddha, burning incense with sincerity that I may appeal to Buddha and the gods seated amidst the coloured clouds above and to the gods who are in the depths of the earth, invoking their protection, and in order that I may offer to your souls a taste of the Manna of Heaven."

If you will contrast this sermon, instinct with patriotism and the destiny of man, with the formal and uninspired words of the Shinto priest you will understand something of the difference between the Shinto and Buddhist religions. After the sermon came the reading of the Sacred Books, and then the offering of incense by the officers and *attachés*. Each in his turn strode into the sanctury, stood by the side of the priest, raised his hand to salute the shrine, and stepping forward dropped a fragment into the censer until its fires were smothered and the thin cloud of vapour vanished. General Nishi, as Commander of the Second Division, was the first to make this offering to the spirits of his dead comrades, and after him came Prince Kunni, with other members of the Staff, and finally General Sir Ian Hamilton with his colleagues.

Chapter XX

WHY THE JAPANESE LINGERED AT FENG-HOANG-CHENG.

THE Japanese have been blamed for not taking advantage of their victory at the Yalu to press North without delay. There were many reasons for hesitation. In the first place they did not know the strength of the enemy, and feared that General Kuropatkin might descend upon them with overwhelming force. Between the Yalu and Feng-hoang-cheng were several strong positions, where the Russians might have made a stand. General Kuroki accordingly determined to seize the heights about Hamatan, and to await developments. Cavalry patrols were pushed forward, and sent back word that the enemy had evacuated Feng-hoang-cheng. These reports were hardly credited, for Feng-hoang-cheng was a point of great strategic importance—the junction of many roads—where it was expected that the Russians would offer strenuous resistance.

General Kuroki advanced upon Feng-hoang-cheng with the utmost caution, separating his army into three

columns so as to guard against surprise. He was by no means certain that with the force under his command it would be prudent to remain at Feng-hoang-cheng.

The landing of a small part of the Second Army in the Liao-tung Peninsula on May 5th introduced a new factor into the calculations. It was known that a large force of Russians confronted General Oku at Kin-chow, and there was danger that they would be content with holding him while the main army struck at General Kuroki. This was a movement greatly feared by the Japanese and had a powerful influence upon their plans. General Kuroki was of opinion that for three or four months he must be prepared to encounter an enemy twice as numerous as his own army. He had, however, the satisfaction of knowing that if the Russians came upon him in force, the landing of the Second Army would be assured. Accordingly he no sooner entered Feng-hoang-cheng than he proceeded to fortify the surrounding hills. Though the position was strong for defence, the perimeter was too extended for the force at his disposal, and orders were given that in the event of attack the Japanese were to leave the position and meet the enemy in front. The Twelfth Division was posted on the East, the Second Division on the West, and the Guard's Division in the centre on the Pekin road.

On May 26th the battle of Nanshan was fought. Until that victory was won in the Peninsula it was feared that General Oku would be attacked by the

Russian forces North and South of Nanshan, and that General Kuroki would be compelled to relieve the pressure on the Second Army by marching upon Hai-chung. The Russians missed a supreme opportunity. What they ought to have done was to concentrate their forces and make a determined assault upon the army in the Liao-tung Peninsula, or upon the army at Feng-hoang-cheng. But General Kuropatkin's vicious habit of "nibbling" prevailed, and no big movement was attempted. The Russian army was split into ineffectual fragments—some at Kin-chow, others at Kai-ping, some at Liao-tung, others near Feng-hoang-cheng.

Through all these alarms General Kuroki held fast to his purpose of accumulating stores and strengthening the position about Feng-hoang-cheng. He was conscious that the Russians feared him, and would not willingly leave open the road to Liao-tung, even in the hope of crushing General Oku. When General Stakelberg moved south to fight the battle of Te-li-tzu, it appeared as if the moment had arrived for a rapid march on Liao-yang, but the Japanese knew that the Russian force in front of them was strong.

Accordingly General Kuroki remained at Feng-hoang-cheng until he had accumulated stores and munitions of war that made him independent of the immediate control of the sea, and until there was no further risk of the Russians concentrating all their forces against one of the invading armies. The interval

of forty-five days was not wasted. Engineers were occupied in constructing a light railway from the port of Antung, in building bridges across the winding stream of the Tsa-ho, which follows the North as far as the pass of Mou-tien-ling, in making and improving roads over mountains and along valleys, in entrenching hills that command approaches from the North, and in erecting bomb-proof shelters and gun emplacements. Warehouses arose outside the ancient and decaying walls of the city, and were filled with rice and the simple food of the Japanese soldier.

Nor were the combatants idle while this provision was being made for their comfort and security. Mobile columns and strong patrols pushed forward on every side, scouring the country for miles, penetrating as far North as eighty miles due East of Mukden, and creating an impression of bewildering activity. On the East a Russian cavalry division, under General Renekampf—a soldier of great energy and recognised ability—struggled for mastery along the banks of the Pa-tao river, and for a week or more Saimaki became the objective of both forces. Now the town was held by the Japanese, and now we learned that two battalions of the enemy, with a field battery and a regiment of cavalry were in occupation, and that the Japanese had fallen back upon Nai-yang-meun on the Ai-ho. The presence of this force on our right was an embarrassment, and might at a critical moment become a menace. General Kuroki, accordingly, determined to remove the risk, and

despatched a brigade to Nai-yang-meun with orders to get behind the enemy at Saimaki and thus cut off his retreat. As fate would have it, the Russians chose the very hour of the arrival of these reinforcements to attack the town, and were defeated. They retired in confusion, leaving our right flank unassailed. On the West, at Siou-yen the Guards joined hands with the Division landed at Takushan, and drove the enemy in the direction of Hai-cheng.

General Kuropatkin, not being gifted with the power of divination, was deceived by this activity. He evidently believed that General Kuroki was moving Westward toward the railway, and would presently join hands with the divisions in the Liao-tung Peninsula. Appearances lent themselves to this deception. A force had landed at Takushan, two brigades of Guards had occupied Siou-yen, and every day brought report of encounters between patrols and small mobile bodies of the enemy. The long halt at Feng-hoang-cheng helped to confirm the Russian commander in his delusion.

Chapter XXI

ADVANCE TOWARD LIAO-YANG.

THE advance of the First Army toward Liao-yang, long expected, carefully prepared, began on the 24th of June. The Second Division, under General Nishi, moved along the Pekin road; their left flank protected by the Guards Division, and their right by the Twelfth Division. Our last view of the Phœnix Mountain was from the summit of a pass overlooking the river Tsao, and a tract of country as beautiful as an English park.

When we left Feng-hoang-cheng it was with the confident expectation that the Russians would oppose our advance and that the Second Division would not be permitted to occupy Mou-tien-ling without a struggle. At our first halt we learned that the enemy had abandoned Lun-chen-kwan at the foot of the Pass and set fire to their stores. This hasty retirement was not the only evidence of surprise. From our flanks came reports that the Russians were retreating in confusion. Japanese cavalry occupied the foot of Mou-tien-ling on the morning of the 27th of June, and save for a Russian post of

observation in the Pass the road was reported clear as far as Chou-chan—eight miles South of Liao-yang.

The fame of Mou-tien-ling has long been in the mouths of men. It is the "Heaven-reaching Pass," and is described in all military text books as a position of great strategic importance and capable of prolonged defence. Great things we expected of Mou-tien-ling. Yet when General Fujii was beguiled into speaking of it we suspected that it would not bear the test of close acquaintance. Our worst fears were realised when we ascended the Pass. We looked for a mountain and found a hill, for fierce crags and found densely wooded slopes, for a dark and threatening defile and trod a winding forest path, for a wide field of fire and saw nothing save "dead" grounds.

Our march was Northward. For three nights and days rain had fallen in a continuous torrent; the rivers were in flood; the loose friable loam of which the roads are composed was a treacherous bog, and the hills were veiled in clouds of vapour. For several miles we rode along a narrow valley shut in by low hills clothed with vivid green. This defile ended abruptly in a low ridge that closes the North end of the valley like a barrier reef—the water-shed of the Tsao-ho. Here, it was believed, the Russians would make a stand. The position is adapted by nature for defence. The reef commands for three miles the narrow valley along which an army from the South must advance. On either hand are hills seamed with deep dongas and gullies in which

large numbers of men might rest secure from direct fire. Behind these are other hills forming a second line of defence, and to the rear of the reef lies a valley where an army might be sheltered and whence they might approach the first line of defence without exposing a man to the enemy.

The Russians were evidently satisfied with the physical advantages of the position, for they had toiled long and arduously to strengthen it. On the crest of the barrier reef were several empalements for modern quick-firing guns that could have swept the valley from end to end. Other guns—about fifty in all—were to have been posted on the flanking hills. Here, too, were trenches, long lines of them ; not the primitive death-traps that we saw on the North bank of the Yalu, but real trenches, scientifically made, five feet six in depth, giving head cover and approached by traverses. And at the back of the position—a little to the East—stands a bold conical hill, upon which the Russians had constructed a large circular and traversed trench like a fort, dominating the road.

Why had they forsaken these splendid defences ? The explanation was simple. They were in momentary danger of being outflanked. One division of General Kuroki's army was marching along the Pekin road ; another was on the left, and a third on the right. Of the movements of the flanking columns we knew nothing beyond the fact that West of Mou-tien-ling there is a point at which they might concentrate and

join forces with the central column. Herein lay the danger of the Russian position at the Dividing of the Waters. Unless General Kuropatkin was well informed of the movements of the Japanese, and unless he was better prepared than we had hitherto found him he could not hope to check the advance of these three independent divisions. The utmost that could be expected from the Russians was that they might hold the central column and harass the march of the flanking columns long enough to assemble a force to prevent any concentration West of Mou-tien-ling, on the Pekin road. The withdrawal of the main body of the Russian army from Liao-yang to Kai-ping and Hai-cheng made this impossible, and the road North lay open to the Japanese. As the divisions on our flanks advanced the Russian troops at Fun-sui-rei, or the Dividing of the Waters, had no choice save to retire. When we ascended the barrier there was not a sign of the enemy ; the trenches were empty ; the empalements were deserted ; the Russians had withdrawn four days before. Looking South we saw the long line of Japanese transport moving along the valley between green hills, and away in the distance rose a tumultuous sea of purple mountains with crests uplifted to the sky.

At Lien-chen-kwan—five miles from the water shed—we halted once more, and had another opportunity of realising that the army to which we were attached was only one of the pawns upon the chessboard. We had exhausted our moves and must wait.

'At four o'clock on the morning of July 4th we had a surprise. The enemy, who had abandoned Mou-tien-ling three days before, returned and endeavoured to destroy the outposts on the reverse slope. The head quarters of the Second Division to which I was attached was seven miles from the scene of the engagement, and it was not until the following morning that I received permission to visit the Pass. The physical features of the country through which we rode are identical with those to the South of the watershed—a narrow valley, hemmed in by well-wooded hills that extend in every direction like furrows in a ploughed field. The road runs due West, and two miles from Lien-cheng-kwan we halted at the head quarters of the Fifteenth Brigade, at the door of which sat several wounded prisoners of the 10th and 24th East Siberian regiments —our old friends of the Yalu. Four miles beyond rose a bold forest-clad hill—the famous Mou-tien-ling, or Heaven-reaching Pass. The spur springs abruptly from the river flats, and the ascent is made by a steep and winding path which ends in a ravine before the summit is reached. The ridge is narrow, and covered with a dense growth of trees and bush, and the descent is steep until you come to a path that strikes Eastward along a cup-shaped valley, in which are a few scattered homesteads. At the end of this path is a temple dedicated to the memory of a famous emperor named Kwan-tai. On the Eastern slope beyond this shrine is another temple, and near to it a wood that played an important part in the attack on the outposts.

On the 2nd of July the 2nd battalion of the 30th regiment of Japanese infantry occupied the Pass and made the temple of Kwan-tai its Head-Quarters. It was the commander of the battalion—Major Takakusaki —who told us the story of the fight. From the second temple we walked along a shady lane to a road overlooking a valley on the Eastern slope of the hill. The road was stained with blood and littered with spent cartridges and scraps of paper inscribed with Russian characters. Looking Eastward we saw a broad ravine enclosed with hills of sharp ascent. The entrance to the ravine broadens to the river bed, and bending North is closed by several low spurs from one of which rises a white tower or pagoda. In the bed of the ravine are some farm houses, and at the South-west corner rises a conical hill behind which is a new road made by the Russians in order to avoid the steep ascent of the Pass. This road sweeps round the Mou-tien-ling spur in the shadow of many ridges. On our left was the wood near the temple, on our right the new road, behind us the ridges, and before us the broad ravine with the conical hill on our right. The road on which we stood overlooking the ravine had a trench that ran up to the wood.

The disposition of the outposts at midnight on the 3rd inst. was after this manner. A sentry watched from the conical hill, and in the houses in the ravine was a piquet commanded by Lieutenant Yoshi Seigo, with a sentry three hundred yards in front and patrols beyond.

In the hills above the new road was posted one company, half of which patrolled the hilly country nearest to the enemy. In the second temple was another company covering the left flank, two sections occupied the wood near the temple, one section lay in the trench on the slope of the ravine, and two companies were concealed in the valley behind the temple of Kwan-tai.

Under cover of darkness two battalions of Russian infantry entered the ravine from the Liao-yang road. They followed upon the heels of the Japanese patrols so closely that the sentry in front of the picquet appears to have mistaken them for his comrades. Without answering his challenge the head of the leading battalion pressed forward and reached the picquet before the alarm was given. Lieutenant Yoshi Seigo rushed out to find the house in which the picquet lay almost surrounded. There was no time to organise any plan, and the picquet pouring out of the house engaged in a hand-to-hand combat with sword and bayonet. Five of them were slain, but not before their commander had cut down three of the enemy. About thirty escaped and made for the head of the ravine toward the Japanese trench. Seeing a black line on the ridge Lieutenant Yoshi Seigo came to the conclusion that his comrades were on the alert and were holding the road against the advancing infantry. Not until he had approached within a few yards did he discover that he was again in the midst of the enemy, and that the

Russians had already got a footing on the road. Meanwhile the company in the wood near the temple, warned by the rifle shots, made ready to receive the attack, and an officer's patrol of twenty men who were just on the point of leaving collected near the wood at the end of the trench. Within a few moments after the alarm the whole company formed a line from the wood to a point half way along the road with the enemy in front of them.

The state of the road showed how fierce was the fight. A Japanese sergeant struck off the head of a Russian officer and slew two men before he fell pierced by five bayonets. The sword of Yoshihara Chuji was notched like the edge of a saw. A second lieutenant fought like a tiger and died with five bullets in his breast. For fifteen minutes or more the road about the trench was a tangle of dark figures, hacking and thrusting and shooting. At last the company gave way and fell back into the scrub behind the ridge, whence it poured a deadly fire into the Russian ranks. In the meantime, reinforcements were hurrying from the valley beyond the temple. One company came racing up, dashed into the wood and out upon the road right into the thick of the foe. Once more the fight swept on hand to hand, with sword and bayonet and revolver. Against the ferocity of this attack the enemy recoiled and, turning, fled down the slope into the ravine followed by the rifle shots of three companies who lined the hills. The fourth company had taken a position on

the ridge commanding the new road along which an attack from the second Russian battalion was expected, but this force of the enemy never got beyond the conical hill at the corner of the ravine. Finding his flank secure, Major Takakusaki led his men to the front in time to take up the pursuit. The Russians left fifty-three dead on the field and forty-seven wounded of whom three died. Three unwounded men and ninety-eight rifles fell into the hands of the victorious outpost. The two battalions were accompanied by fifty Cossack cavalry and brought with them large quantities of supplies as well as cooking utensils. It looked as if their intention was to stay, though it was difficult to imagine that this was a serious attempt to re-occupy the Pass which they had abandoned without a struggle. If this really was their object it can be explained only on the ground that General Kuropatkin sought at the last moment to delay our advance until he could make good his position on the North road. The attack was badly planned and badly executed. The second battalion took no part in the action and there was obvious miscarriage of the plan for an assault on the right flank of the Japanese. The enemy made a gallant fight, but courage could not avail where leadership was manifestly wanting in skill and foresight. The Japanese loss was only thirteen killed and thirty wounded.

Mou-tien-ling, after all, had done something to deserve its repute in the war of 1894 when the Chinese

on two occasions succeeded in wresting the Pass from the Japanese. As we turned to descend the mountain we saw on the isolated hill above the ravine—clear against the blue sky—the solitary figure of a sentinel straining his eyes toward the East where the enemy lay in silence.

Chapter XXII

ATTACK ON MOU-TIEN-LING.

At dawn, on the 18th of July, we were roused by the sound of rifles and the hurrying feet of armed men. A dense mist lay over the valley of Lien-chen-kwan, and out of the darkness beyond came the solemn booming of volleys. The little stone house on the other side of the river slept soundly. Nothing of importance could be happening as long as the General was within those silent walls. We went back to our tents, but not to slumber. Minutes passed and still the volleys echoed among the cloud-capped hills. The little house woke with a start. Officers dropped in by twos and threes; orderlies came and went, and the hitching posts at the door held a mob of screaming horses. Something more than an affair of outposts?

We dressed and made ready to ride to the front. But the Japanese were as careful of us as if they were our mothers. They had set their faces firmly against risk on our part. "You must wait," said our mentor, and he meant it this time. So we waited, booted and spurred—waited and watched troops hastening forward, wiping

the sweat from their brows as they ran: waited and watched ammunition wagons rumble by: waited and heard the volleys drowned in the roar of artillery, sharp and solemn as thunder peals among the mountains. To our impatience was the same answer: "You must wait."

The crowd before the little house grew. Foreign *attachés*, eager for their first battle, came riding up. For them was the same order: "Wait." Importunity avails not with a Staff officer whom you must approach through an interpreter. Near and more near boomed the cannons. They knocked at our very door. But the Staff officer was unmoved. "You must wait." Chinese women and girls seized their bundles and fled into the mountain whence they had come after the retreat of the Russians—they did not like the soldiers of the Czar. In the little house over the river orderlies packed up and prepared for a flitting. Was it so serious as that? A telegraph section crossed the stream and ran a wire up the hill where three men stood like statues in the mist. We breakfasted and waited and watched more soldiers mopping their foreheads as they doubled past and more ammunition wagons rolling to the front. At last came release, and at a canter we started for the scene of action, Mou-tien-ling once more.

For days there had been unwonted activity in the enemy's camp West of the Pass. Reinforcements arrived and preparations were made to renew, on a

grand scale, the attack of the 4th of July. Meanwhile, the Japanese had strengthened their advance post and awaited the assault. A strict vigil was kept, and for two nights men slept fully armed. Shortly after midnight on the 16th the officer commanding the brigade on the North of the Pass was informed that a body of the enemy was moving on his front. The attack was about to be delivered. He sent warning to the head quarters of the brigade West of Mou-tien-ling, and measures were taken to repel the enemy. At half-past two o'clock on the morning of the 17th a squadron of cavalry and a large force of infantry appeared in the valley that debouches on the road to Liao-yang, and reaches by a gradual ascent the road over the Pass. Three thousand five hundred yards from Mou-tien-ling—on the road to Liao-yang—stands a white tower, conspicuous on the lower spur of a hill. West of the To-wan—the name given to this locality—the road approaches the Pass between hills, and enters a narrow valley in which are two tiny hamlets—Kinki-hotsu at the Western end, and Lika-hotsu in the middle. The sides of the valley run North and South and are steep. Leaving the valley the road ascends past an isolated conical hill to a sharp low ridge, which closes the Eastern end of the defile. Upon this road, commanding the valley and its approach from the West is a trench—the farthest point reached by the Russians on the 4th of July. At the back of the trench is some scrub, and to the left of it, facing West, is a small plantation, and behind that again a shrine, from

which the road dips into a gorge, and then ascends to a broad ridge. From the centre of this ridge, which is like a bow bent between broad backed hills, rises a temple, large and solidly built—the head quarters of the post. East of the temple the ridge tumbles into a V-shaped valley, the Western slope of which rises abruptly to the summit of Mou-tien-ling—the Japanese line of defence.

Orders had been given that picquets and posts were not to resist the enemy if he appeared in force. They were to fall back upon the defensive line on the summit. The Russians advanced "like dark waves of the sea," and picquet and post withdrew from the hamlet in the valley and from the trench and the temple, firing a few random shots as they retired. Not being accustomed to so gentle a reception the enemy became suspicious and advanced very cautiously toward the temple. Here they seemed inclined to halt, and a few Japanese skirmishers were sent forward to discover their position. When day broke the Russians were in possession of the Western slopes, ridges and valleys of Mou-tien-ling; their right wing rested on a broad hill eight hundred yards from the Japanese trenches below the summit of the Pass: on their right rear was a plantation filled with riflemen; their left flank occupied a trench on a hill fronting the summit, while their centre held the ridge about the temple. In the V-shaped valley were more troops who had marched by the road South of the Pass and in front of the white tower—three thousand

five hundred yards away on the Liao-yang road—was posted a field battery of eight guns. Seven Russian regiments or nearly thirty thousand fighting men were engaged, for the attack was not confined to Mou-tien-ling but covered a front of fifteen miles. Three Japanese regiments and one field battery held the Pass. Their left wing was secure, close to it lay a division, but the right was weak and might have suffered but for the magnificent courage of a single company at an isolated post six or seven miles to the North.

The dispositions were made under cover of night, and at dawn the two forces confronted each other across a steep and narrow valley. Though the mist still shrouded the mountain the fight began. At twenty minutes before five o'clock a steady fusilade was opened from both sides. The road from the temple to the crest has a gradual assent, and on one side the ground rises to a height of two or three feet. Under this cover a few daring Russians pressed forward but they could not hope to reach the summit. The bend in the path was quickly strewn with dead. And now was approaching the moment for energetic action. The Russian guns must remain silent; they could do nothing without endangering their comrades in front. The Japanese were anxious not to unmask their artillery too early in the encounter, for they had on the crest only one battery of field guns. Soon after six o'clock this caution was laid aside, and the Japanese guns began to speak. The air was now clear, and below the guns, at a range of fifteen

hundred yards, lay a splendid target—the enemy massed in the V-shaped valley. A hail of shrapnel tore gaps in the close ranks and strewed the valley with dead and dying. To this destructive bombardment was added the distant fire of a battalion of rifles on the extreme right.

Notwithstanding these losses in the valley the Russians were secure on the ridge about the temple, and there appeared no reason why they should not remain there until turned out by the bayonet. Their right was pushed well forward in trench and wood, from which the Japanese advance could be enfiladed and taken in the rear; their left was strongly posted in a trench commanding the steep decline down which the Japanese must come from the right, and their centre had the shelter of the solidly built temple, with a compound surrounded by a high stone wall. Any attempt on the part of the Japanese to rush the position must have been attended with great loss, and might easily have proved disastrous. That General Nishi fully realised the danger was shown by the rapidity with which the reinforcements were hurried forward.

A nine o'clock the enemy began to retire. The cause of this unexpected determination to abandon an obvious advantage was obscure. It might have been due to the action of a reconnoitring party from the division on our left. At any rate the story was that on the morning of the 17th a patrol from our left encountered a body of Russians, and was driven back. Returning with one battalion and a battery they renewed

the combat and put the Russians to flight. Not content with this success, the commander of the force resolved to push forward in the direction of Mou-tien-ling, whence he heard heavy firing. Having faith in the old maxim of "marching to the cannon," he abandoned the road, led his battalion over the mountains and suddenly appeared in the rear of the Russians, about three miles beyond To-wan.

General Keller, who was in command, may have imagined that this was a counter attack on his right flank, and that his line of retreat was seriously menaced. Whatever the cause the result was before us when we arrived at Mou-tien-ling.

The retirement began on the left, the men falling back steadily to the shelter of the plantation. Hard upon their heels came the Japanese, firing into the scrub and young timber, out of which flew thick and fast the bullets of the hidden foe. Twice the pursuers tried to penetrate the wood, and twice they fell back. It was impossible to take aim, for though the trees and undergrowth were not strong enough to afford cover they were dense enough for concealment. When at last the Japanese succeeded in entering, the greater part of the enemy had descended into the valley and were taking up a position on the right to cover the retirement of the centre. A few, however, remained, and these the Japanese officer invited by a gesture to lay down their arms and surrender. Five immediately dropped on their knees and fired, without effect. So the combat in

the wood was renewed, and as we passed through we saw many a grim evidence of the struggle. The centre retired slowly and in good order, covered by a flanking fire from the hills on the left. A small rear guard remained at the temple, around which lay several dead and wounded. Left and centre were now in retreat, taking up positions from which they checked any disposition on the part of the Japanese to come to close quarters.

In the plantation near the shrine, and on the conical hill, the Russians remained for some time, but they made no attempt to recover the lost ground. Meanwhile, the Russian right had withdrawn from the slopes to the crests of the hills north of the temple, whence they opened a cross fire upon the pursuit before they streamed away into the valley and the Liao-yang road. A fine target they afforded on the green hill side, but the Japanese guns were silent. Hour after hour went by as we followed the firing line and watched the slow and deliberate retirement of the enemy. A strong force had secured the hills close to the entrance of the valley on the North, and here they remained firing volley after volley whenever a forward movement was threatened by the Japanese. One battalion that ventured too far into the valley tempted the Russian gunners to open fire, and a dozen soldiers were quickly stretched on the grass by one shell. Another battalion pressed along the South slope toward the mouth of the valley, but could not descend without exposing itself to a ruthless fusilade.

Thus the position remained until late in the afternoon. From the trench in front of the shrine, and from the conical hill we saw the enemy in retreat toward To-wan. A long line of ambulance wagons stretched beyond the white tower; behind them marched infantry and cavalry in close order; and in the rear waited a strong force of infantry and cavalry with half a battery. They were guarding the exit from the valley along which strolled an occasional soldier with a gait as leisurely and a manner as indifferent as though these were manœuvres instead of war. At any sign of advance by the Japanese, the infantry at the entrance to the valley formed up to oppose them, and the guns were unlimbered and trained. This sufficed; the Japanese were not strong enough to force an attack home. Here was the moment when one realised the importance of horse artillery. A single battery well handled would have turned this deliberate retirement into a stampede. The pursuit was not pressed, and the army of General Keller drew off with a final cannonade directed against our right.

Away on our right flank was enacted a dramatic episode that might have been a tragedy. In order to avoid the Pass the Russians had made a road which sweeps round the North spur of the mountain, following the plain from a point near Lien-chen-kwan to the road leading to Am-ping. By this way came a force of the enemy. At a point six miles north of Mou-tien-ling they met a Japanese outpost of one company. Though

greatly outnumbered, the outpost realising the importance of its position, withstood the onslaught. Hemmed in by six companies they fought as Japanese soldiers always fight—with the coolness and skill of veterans, and the courage of fanatics. Closer and closer drew the enemy until the struggle was almost hand to hand. Numbers could not avail against courage so desperate. The Russians retreated, leaving their dead and wounded, and our right flank was safe. But the cost was great to this gallant company. All the officers were killed or wounded, and of the rank and file twenty were killed and forty-five wounded.

There was a moment when the position on our left flank in the Pass looked not less critical, for the enemy came within eight hundred yards and had good cover. But reinforcements arrived and that interval was soon a glacis of bullets across which no troops, however desperate, could have passed.

It is not easy to understand this repeated effort to capture a position which was abandoned without firing a shot. The explanation has been offered that Mou-tien-ling was evacuated without the knowledge of General Kuropatkin and on the rumour that two divisions were threatening to outflank the position. A more probable explanation is that General Kuropatkin, finding it necessary to withdraw his force from the Liao-tung Peninsula, and to fall back on Liao-yang, determined to recover the Pass, in the hope of delaying the advance of General Kuroki, who was seeking to effect a junction with General Oku in front of Liao-yang.

Chapter XXIII

ASSAULT ON CHAOTOA.

At Chaotoa the Russians had a position of the highest strategic importance, from which they could threaten the advance of our right wing upon Liao-yang or Mukden. Bridge Head—as it was called—was also a barrier against the junction of our division—an armed point thrust between our centre and our right flank that an enterprising enemy might use to arrest any forward movement or in another attack on Mou-tien-ling. The necessity of removing this menace became urgent after the second attempt to recover the Pass, and the task was undertaken by the force whose head quarters were at Saimaki. Chaotoa is twenty miles north of Lien-chen-kwan, but in order to reach it safely we must retrace our steps toward Feng-hoang-cheng and strike North-east beyond the watershed. Leaving Saimaki on the right the road traverses a mountainous country and in fifty miles crosses the river at a score of places. By a rapid ascent we reach the watershed of the Eastern range—a lofty eminence whence the eye

Japanese Ambulance Party, Chaotoa.

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wanders over a heaving ocean of mountain and valley, clothed in many shaded greens of ripening maize and cotton and indigo. As you draw near to the Tai-tsu river you enter a long defile through which flows a stream, and at the western end of the defile rises Chaotoa. The strength of the position is at once apparent. Its precipitous front is washed by a tributary river which flows North to join the valley stream and turning West empties its waters into the broad flood of the Tai-tsu beyond Amping. In the angle of the meeting of the waters was the enemy's fortified position. Their front was a sheer precipice with the deep river below ; their left flank sloped gently down to the valley stream beyond which was a plain stretching to the Northern heights, and their right wing was defended by hills. From this secure angle the Russian guns commanded the valley and road : approach on their left was impossible without scaling heights beyond which runs the deep broad river Tai-tsu.

Chaotoa had been chosen as a defensive position some weeks before. Trenches and gun emplacements had been made and had been abandoned. But when General Kuropatkin decided to attack Mou-tien-ling a second time, Chaotoa came once more into favour, and two brigades with twenty-four field guns, eight mountain guns and a regiment of cavalry were sent to re-occupy the place. Their first duty was to construct new trenches and gun emplacements. The lines of trenches followed the contour of the ridge, covering front and flanks save

on the left slope by which the united streams flow Westward. The right flank resting on hills was thrown back toward the river and the gun positions dominated road and valley, one battery being posted at the right centre. This was the strength and situation of the enemy for several days previous to the assault on Mou-tien-ling upon the 17th of July. But they were not to remain long in uninterrupted possession. On the morning of the 17th, the Japanese began their advance. One thousand Cossacks appeared on their flank to the North-west of Saimaki and sought to arrest the movement. But cavalry that must keep to the roads is of little use except for reconnoitring and the Japanese had ceased to hold the Cossack in much respect. The Russians were easily persuaded to retire, and the only result of this demonstration of weakness was that one battalion, instead of three battalions as was originally intended, remained near Saimaki to guard our communications.

On the afternoon of the 18th, the advance guard of the Japanese entered the valley before Chaotoa. The road winds between ranges of hills following the course of the river whose banks are dotted with peaceful homesteads and are vividly green with the ripening crops. As it approaches Chaotoa the valley opens out to the South and West into a cultivated plain backed by hills, and bounded by the stream which flows along the front of the enemy's position. Russian patrols and pickets were in the hills along the South of the valley, but they

made no effort to arrest the advance. Before the steady movement of our troops, the Russians fell back behind the trenches and guns of Chaotoa and awaited the inevitable assault.

At noon a Japanese battalion had taken up a position near a village on the South from which the movements of the enemy could be observed. Clouds of dust indicated that they were withdrawing their heavy baggage to a safe distance ; soldiers retired from the trenches, and a wild fear seized the Japanese that the enemy were about to escape without a fight. Orders were given to prepare for the pursuit, and the battalion was about to leave the village when a mounted officer was seen to ride away, and presently the Russian troops re-ascended the slope and lined the trenches. At half past four in the afternoon the enemy opened on the village with sixteen guns and did considerable damage, for the Japanese mountain batteries had not arrived.

From the valley the position looked unassailable save by a frontal attack against an entrenched precipice —an assault from which even the votaries of frontal attacks would shrink. But the Japanese are not easily deterred by appearances ; they hold fast to the sound doctrine that every position, however strong, has its weak point, and that the first duty of a commander is to discover that weakness. So the day passed in desultory fighting and at night the real preparations were made. Among military experts in Europe there

is a tradition that the Japanese avoid movements in the night. It is the part of wisdom to prefer the light; yet this theory, like many more affecting the Japanese, will bear revision. Under cover of darkness General Inouye made his disposition for the assault on the morrow. His command consisted of three infantry regiments, five mountain batteries and some cavalry. Two regiments were moved forward to the front of Chaotoa. They lay in the maize fields hidden from view by the broad green leaves of the rising corn and spent the night in making breastworks. This front line stretched from the North side of the valley across the stream and extended over the plain on the enemy's front and right. The Japanese right flank was within 900 mètres from the Russian trenches and their left was only 1,200 mètres distant. Before them were the deep river and the precipitous side of Chaotoa. One regiment, commanded by Colonel Hiraoka, who was the Japanese *attaché* in the Boer war, remained in reserve for a most important mission.

Night came, and the shadows stole up the hills, leaving the valley in darkness. A strange stillness filled the air with foreboding. The moon rose and flooded the hills with light, but revealed no sign of the approaching conflict. Yet, in the corn fields below, thousands of khaki clad men burrowed like moles. The enemy must have been conscious of their presence, for they opened a cannonade that continued at intervals through the night. From the trenches also came rifle

fire, and twice in the darkness a small force advanced to dispute the passage of the river. They brought with them drums and trumpets. Could it be that the Russians had adopted Chinese methods of warfare, and hoped to scare the enemy with discord, or did they imagine that they might delude the Japanese into belief that they were an army on the march? The musicians left some of their instruments on the field. But from the corn fields came no response. Bullets whistled among the green stalks, carrying death and wounds in sharp swift notes to two hundred and eighty unseen men, but not a sound or a sign was given. On the left, especially, our casualties were heavy, for the line of infantry was within decisive range. At last day dawned, and the hills awoke. Two mountain batteries had been carried to the crest of a hill commanding the Russian position from the East at a distance of 3,480 mètres; three other mountain batteries were posted on the North bank of the stream, about half way down the valley; they were in the shadow of a temple, 2,800 mètres from the enemy. The Russians had no difficulty in locating the first artillery position, but of the second they remained long in ignorance. The four hundred shells they directed against it fell on a hill upon the opposite bank of the stream where there was neither gun nor rifle. When they discovered the mistake their range was deadly in its accuracy, for it had doubtless been carefully measured, but there were defects in the Russian fuses that rendered their shells often harmless.

While the artillery duel was in progress the Japanese were launching a bolt more deadly than the shells of their mountain guns. I have spoken of a weak point in the Russian position. That weakness was on the right, where the hills appeared to afford a natural defence. But hills are dangerous things unless well guarded, and the Russians had not learned the lesson of turning movements. Soon after daybreak there came from the rear of our position at the Eastern end of the valley a regiment of brave and determined men. They had before them a long and difficult march, and at the end of the journey a desperate task to perform. Their leader was a soldier who had learned some useful lessons in South Africa, for Colonel Hiraoka did not believe that military science began and ended with the Franco-German War. He led his regiment into the mountains and vanished from our view. Meanwhile, the men in the cornfields waited long and anxiously. Already they had observed symptoms of uneasiness on the part of the Russians, and feared that they might escape before the web was spun round them. At one o'clock in the afternoon some men left the trenches and did not return. Another hour crept by and the Russian guns were withdrawn. It was obvious that the enemy suspected some deep laid scheme and was making ready to depart. General Inouye watched anxiously from the gun position in the valley, and his glance was fixed on the hills to his left. Moments went by, and half an hour seemed an age.

At last the signal! from the Russian trenches on the right came volley after volley hurtling over the plain. The leaden hail swept across the fields, and the corn stalks snapped under the hurricane like the cracking of a myriad whips. This sudden storm was directed against the defile beyond the plain where the head of Colonel Hiraoka's regiment appeared—appeared and vanished again to hurl itself on the right flank of the Russians. In seven hours they had marched across nineteen miles of trackless mountains, and climbed three steep ranges under a blazing sun. Their arrival was well timed; had they been half-an-hour later they would have failed in their mission. Two companies from the force near Lien-cheng-kwan had hurried forward to meet them, and were fortunate in effecting a junction. For a second or two they stood out against the sky—a dark extended line advancing rapidly under a heavy fire. On they swept with a cheer! The mountain batteries in the valley—no longer having to face the superior range and weight of the Russian guns—moved forward to their aid and hurled shrapnel into the position. For nearly an hour the fight went on with fury; but not for a moment did the regiment waver or loosen its grip on the enemy. Their losses were heavy, and their leader fell mortally wounded, yet they held fast, and the victory was theirs. With a shout that rang like a trumpet among the echoing hills up sprang the fighting line from the cornfields; each maize stalk became an armed man. Into the river they rushed. The waters

were deep and the current was strong, yet in they sprang, holding their rifles aloft. Up to their necks they were, and only one man was drowned. Under cover of the precipice they darted toward the exposed flank of the Russians. Before this desperate onslaught the shaken enemy could not stand. They fled down the slope, and, massing near a plantation, made ready for flight. But their retirement was not so orderly and deliberate as at Mou-tien-ling. The guns opened and they bolted like hares.

To complete their discomfiture two companies and one section had scaled the heights on the North, and, hurrying West, suddenly appeared among the hills on the Russian flank. The enemy were now under rifle fire from three sides and did not stop to arrange the order of their going. The flight spread North and West, and at a quarter past five o'clock in the afternoon the flag of the Rising Sun floated over Chaotoa and one hundred and fifty Russians dead. Sixty-five prisoners were taken of whom thirty-three were unwounded. Many wounded were carried from the field early in the day when the fight was practically suspended. Among the spoil were 215 rifles, 17,878 rounds of ammunition, three caisons, 152 shells, 26 tents, seven drums and four trumpets. The Japanese casualties were 523—two officers and seventy men killed, sixteen officers and 435 men wounded. The Japanese guns fired 440 common shells and 2,500 shrapnel shells.

The capture of Chaotoa was a brilliant exploit, and must be accepted as another proof of the immense superiority of the Japanese infantry. The Russian troops were from Europe; they outnumbered their assailants by nearly two to one; their twenty-four field guns were opposed to mountain batteries; their position was strong by nature and art, and much depended on their retention of Chaotoa. The flanking movements were splendidly executed; and the one regret was that Colonel Hiraoka did not live to reap the reward of his victory.

Chapter XXIV

THE ADVANCE ON LIAO-YANG.

A GENERAL ACTION.

By the light of the moon we mounted our horses and took the road once more to Mou-tien-ling. The valley lay before us folded in the death-like slumber that precedes the dawn. Against the opalescent sky the mountains were dark shadows, and in the pearly mist willow and birch took the feathery shape of palm. There was a brooding expectancy about the scene that worked strongly on the imagination. Our mood was attuned to the mystery of the night and we rode on in silence. Twelve hours before we were looking across the graves of wasted days. For a whole month we had camped in the squalid hamlet of Lien-chen-kwan and counted ourselves among its oldest habitants. When the Japanese army halts it halts with an air of permanence. The place is swept, houses are cleaned, bridges are built, roads made and repaired, store houses erected, trenches dug and earthworks constructed.

Captured Russian Guns.

[*facing p.* 186

You feel that you are settled for life, and are beginning to reconcile yourself to irresistable fate when, presto! the order comes to march.

"Military *attachés* and foreign correspondents will assemble at Head-Quarters at three o'clock in the morning." Nothing more was said, but we knew that it meant another step in our deliberate progress to Liao-yang. How changed was the scene from that of two weeks before. Then the road swarmed with armed men hurrying to the front; horses and guns swept onward in a roaring cataract and the glowing hills echoed with the thunders of war. Now we were a solitary troop of horsemen riding through a deserted valley, whither and with what purpose we knew not. Yet the breathless quiet and the dimness of the enfolding mist were filled with vague portents that touched deeper chords than those vibrated by the tumult of battle. We were conscious of the brooding presence of some mighty force which would appear and change earth and sky like a tornado, leaving death and destruction in its path.

For many days the storm clouds had been gathering on the Northern and Western horizons. Port Arthur was struggling in a deadly embrace; the army of the Peninsula was tightening its grip upon the enemy, and we were slowly drawing near to the door through which he must escape. In spite of lyrical outbursts on the courage and patriotism of the Russian soldier, despite plans devised by idle hands in distant countries,

in face of hypotheses about what must happen in this and that circumstance, there was only one course open to General Kuropatkin. He must get away as quickly as possible from a situation that seemed without meaning and must end in disaster. If he could not make up his mind to escape, then the Japanese must help him. In their own practical aud decisive manner they must show the Russian commander how imminent was the danger menacing his front and flank and rear, on the road between Hai-cheng and Liao-yang. With that object—and incidentally in the hope of saving the Russians from the necessity of continuing an apparently hopeless contest—the order was given for a general attack on Sunday the 31st of July.

Military historians are agreed that of all operations the most difficult and hazardous is that which demands simultaneous action by isolated and widely separated bodies of troops. The Japanese, however, are of opinion that the axioms of war are not axioms till they have been proved upon their own persons. Accordingly, with the aid of the telegraph and the telephone, and with confidence born of an unbroken series of victories, they made this concerted attack at three points on a front of sixty miles and added another triumph to their record. The force moving from the South met with no opposition and entered Hai-cheng, while the army landed at Takushan, and operating between the armies of the Peninsula and the East struck the enemy's retreating flank and left its mark upon it.

General Kuroki's part in these operations was more difficult. In front of him was a force superior to his own, with guns of greater range and calibre, strongly entrenched in mountainous country, directed by General Kuropatkin himself, and animated by the knowledge that upon its valour and determination rested the safe deliverance of the Russian army in Manchuria. To those who judge the strength of armies by their masses the task assigned to the First Army seemed hazardous. But, as in mechanics, the Japanese calculate the strength or momentum of their armies by their mass multiplied by their velocity—that is by the spirit of the troops and their desire to fight. This factor is of greater value than battalions, for men who are as eager to fight as the Japanese, always put themselves in the most advantageous position for fighting. It was therefore without any fear of the issue that General Kuroki made his preparations for the attack.

The position of the enemy on the last day of July extended over a distance of twenty-seven miles. Their left flank was at Yu-shu-ling, East of Liao-yang, facing Chaotoa, which was wrested from them on July 19th; their centre was at Tien-shu-tien, opposite Mou-tien-ling and their right wing at Yan-shu-ling, five miles to the Southwest of the Pass. The whole region occupied by the Russians was like a field over which a gigantic plough had passed, leaving mountainous furrows with abrupt slopes and narrow valleys. The Japanese right was at Chaotoa, twenty miles from Mou-tien-ling, and its orders

were to capture Yu-shu-ling; the left at Han-cha-put-su, seven miles South-west of Mou-tien-ling, was to take Yan-shu-ling, while the centre at Mou-tien-ling was to engage the enemy at Tien-shu-tien with a view to assist the flanking movements. The general direction of these combined attacks was toward Liao-yang, upon which the Russians were reported to be retiring from Hai-cheng.

Nature must have some of the martial spirit in her, for she has erected many ramparts in Manchuria. Yu-shu-ling is one of them. Situated on the Sai, a broad deep river, with a tributary stream flowing in front, and flanked by precipieces, Yu-shu-ling seemed an impregnable position. Early on Sunday morning a detachment from our right was sent to meet the enemy, who were reported to be advancing in force down the Mukden road. The Russians had doubtless heard rumours of our movement, and were preparing to deliver a counter attack on our flank, about which two thousand of their cavalry and infantry were hovering. This attack was speedily repulsed, and the main body of the Japanese, dividing into two, moved Westward, driving in the outposts. At daybreak they found themselves in front of the main body of the Russians posted on the heights to the West of Yu-shu-ling. The enemy's line faced East, and two thousand métres before it was a strong post. Recognising that a frontal attack was impracticable, the Japanese contented themselves with holding the Russian front. Meanwhile the second force, moving from Chau-to-po-su, South of Chau-tow, made its way

toward Penlin, a Pass in the range between Chau-tow and Yu-shu-ling. At Penlin were two Russian regiments whom the Japanese drove out after a sharp contest. So far the fighting had been devoid of unusual incident, and neither side appeared to have gained any material advantage. But a serious disaster was threatening the enemy; one of those unexpected blows that shake the nerves of men and leave them powerless against fate.

To the assistance of our right wing and to make some appearance of contact with the centre, there had been despatched from Gebato, North-east of Mou-tien-ling, a small force of infantry. Marching North-west they came to the Pass of Cho-bai-rai which is South of Penlin. At that moment three Russian battalions appeared, moving up the slopes of the Pass. Each side saw at a glance that whoever gained the Pass held the other in the hollow of his hand. The Japanese won the race, and seizing the crest poured volley after volley into the broken ranks of the enemy.

The attack on our left flank was not so successful. The enemy occupied a range of heights West and South of Mou-tien-ling. Their right flank was near Sui-cha-pu-zo facing South, their right near To-wan fronting East, and their centre overlooked the cornfields South of Mou-tien-ling. Upon these lofty and steep hills they had posted forty-four field guns, eighteen on the left, sixteen in the centre and ten on the right. Miles of roads had been made up the mountain sides and along the summits; gun emplacements had been

constructed to sweep the valley, to search the Pass and to command the approach from the South-east, and the hills were lined with tiers of trenches carefully hidden under green branches.

Against this formidable array of quick firing guns which carry a shell weighing fifteen pounds, our left flank had five batteries of field guns and one battery of mountain guns firing eleven pound shells. But, owing to the difficult character of the country, they were unable to bring into action more than the mountain battery and thirteen field guns. Scouting parties had been sent out on the previous night to find positions for the artillery, and through the dark hours gunners and sappers aided by three battalions of infantry were making and repairing roads and constructing emplacements. Their labours, however, could not overcome the natural obstacles, and the use of double teams failed to get all the guns into position. Soon after midnight on July 30th, a detachment was sent to threaten the right rear of the enemy, and succeeded in approaching the position despite a counter attack which was repulsed with loss. At one o'clock in the morning began the general advance of our left, and at seven both infantry and artillery were engaged. The movement was mainly directed against the right flank upon which our guns made no impression, although before noon nine guns had fired a thousand shells at a range of 3,765 yards. Ammunition ran short, for it was impossible to get the wagons up the slopes and the shells had to be carried by

hand. The Russian gunners displayed unwonted skill and energy; their aim was often deadly in its accuracy and drove our men to cover time after time; their guns were served with wonderful rapidity and their superior weight and range were only too apparent.

Nor did the infantry of the left fare much better. They were called upon to carry by assault a position from which most troops would have recoiled. For the first time the Russian trenches were invisible to the naked eye. Evidently they had taken counsel from disaster and have adopted that concealment which is the first principle of war with repeating rifles and smokeless powder. Near Sui-cha-pu-zo, almost at the centre of the enemy's right flank, one regiment was checked before eight o'clock, and the first and second officers in command were wounded. Another regiment fought hard until eleven o'clock, and three companies, having lost their commanders, succeeded in establishing themselves within two thousand mètres of the enemy. Here they remained, unable to advance in face of the heavy rifle and artillery fire. At noon our left was held in check and the enemy remained secure in all their positions about Yanshuling.

It was clear that if we were to escape from this *impasse* our centre must emerge from the passive *rôle* assigned to it in the plan of operations. Since dawn we had watched for signs of activity in the Pass. Hitherto the only part we had taken in the advance was to seize an eminence on the Western front. At

eleven o'clock on the night of the 30th, a company of infantry had dislodged the enemy from this position. The hill was steep and the Russians defended themselves with stones. An avalanche of rocks swept the assailants off their feet and did serious damage. The commander of the company was wounded as he led his men up the slope: several were killed and more were severely disabled—in all the Japanese had twenty-one casualties before they drove the enemy from the hill at one o'clock in the morning.

Hour after hour went by and from Mou-tien-ling came no sign of the presence of an army. The sun stole slowly above the horizon, scattering the morning mist and flooding the green slopes with intense light. Away in the West, beyond the white tower that rose like a lighthouse from a low spur on the Pekin road, were small parties of Russian horsemen. Their white tunics were distinctly visible and distinguished them from a few Chinese who flitted about the entrance to the Pass as though uncertain on which side lay safety.

From Mou-tien-ling the Pekin road runs West past the white tower to the village of To-wan and divided the Russian position. At right angles to it, before you come to the tower, is another road, bounded on the East by the steep slope of the Pass and on the West by a range of lofty hills. Between these boundaries stretches a broad cultivated valley watered by a shallow stream, on the West bank of which is situated the village of Tien-shu-tien. In these hills

Japanese Funeral Service.

The Tower at To-wan.

[*facing p.* 194

lay the enemy strongly entrenched and protected by two gun positions, one of which was between two conical peaks on a razor-like ridge flanked by a small wood.

Six batteries were on our front—four on the ridge overlooking the valley and the village of Tien-shu-tien, and two on the slope to the south of the Pass commanding the Pekin road and the hills on either side. On the slopes behind the guns reclined soldiers waiting the order to rise and advance. The artillery duel on our left began at seven o'clock, and continued with varying degrees of intensity until noon. For four hours the hills and valleys re-echoed with the long rolling thunder of guns; ridge and slope gave forth clouds of white and brown smoke as if they had suddenly become active volcanoes; and from the blue sky descended tiny white clouds with hearts of flame from which dated a hail of lead. Now and then you could hear the music of the shrapnel like the swish of a mighty rod across the heavens, dying away to the lazy humming of bees. It is fascinating music, though, like the song of the Syren, deadly. To the mere observer, however experienced, an artillery duel affords ample scope for speculation. When a hundred guns are in action over a wide front no eye and no ear can judge either the direction or the result with any approach to certainty. More than one of the Russian gun positions remained undiscovered throughout the day, and our own gun position South of the Pass never drew a shot from the enemy.

Shortly after noon the centre burst into activity. The four batteries on the ridge to our right opened with energy upon the enemy's position above Tien-shu-tien, while the two batteries on our left turned their attention to the hills South of Tow-an. New life had come into the fight, and through the burning air screamed a hundred shells. The ridge in front of the Pass smoked and flamed, while the cone-like peaks beyond the valley seemed to spring from a burning lake. Again the Russian gunners displayed their skill, and the range of their artillery. Into the batteries on our right burst shell upon shell, scattering the gunners and sending the infantry to closer cover down the slope. The colonel in command of our artillery was slightly wounded, and several men were killed and disabled. In vain our gunners strove to locate some of the hidden batteries that were most active, and in vain they endeavoured to silence those which were unmasked. The enemy's guns were skilfully posted, and the gunners had taken the precaution to peel some of the trees and to measure the ranges on our front. Hence the accuracy with which they searched our positions, though they did no damage to the guns and put none out of action.

I must now return to our left wing, where the result of this activity in the centre was anxiously awaited. The infantry had been checked all along the line, though the men stuck bravely to their positions in front of the hidden trenches, and kept well under cover.

At noon the order was given for our left to advance, and after a heroic effort one regiment reached the foot of a wooded hill on which the enemy had three tiers of trenches. Beyond this point they could not go, for the slope was swept with a sheet of lead. Here they lay panting from their great exertions, and from the heat of the day. The sun beat down upon them with pitiless intensity; the ground was like an oven; the air vibrated with waves of heat like a mirage in the desert. Many were already suffering from sun stroke and heat apoplexy. The men were enduring all the torments of thirst, their lips were dry and cracked; their tongues were hard and parched, and their eyes were scorched with the glare. And to add to their agony there ran in front of them a brook, clear and cold from the mountains.

I have seen men and horses stampede at sight of the Nile and throw themselves into the yellow flood, and I have watched soldiers quench their thirst amid a hail of bullets. The risk was great, but the need was greater, and across the deadly space dashed the Japanese. Plunging their heads into the brook they cooled their parched throats and fevered skins, and came back to cover. Another regiment had worked its way painfully and with loss to a position within six or seven hundred yards from a ridge, the approach to which was like a glacis. On the ridge were five hundred riflemen. They had no trench, yet they held a whole regiment beyond that "long deadly zone of horizontal fire which is the most powerful factor in battle." This small body of Russians

was composed of determined men; they took steady and careful aim; the ground was favourable, and the result was that which we so often saw in South Africa. When a Japanese raised his head it was to receive a bullet; when an officer showed himself it was to have a volley. Against such a fire mere masses could not avail.

With European troops it is agreed that fifteen per cent. of casualties will check an advance. A greater percentage would be needed to stop Japanese infantry, but even to their reckless courage there is a limit and that limit was reached on our left. The casualties were slowly mounting up. Among the officers slain was Lieut. Shirasawa, who played a brilliant part in the attack on Hamatan on May 1st, leading his section up the hill to capture the Russians, and Sub-Lieut. Kiroke, member of a noble house, who died crying: "Long live the Emperor!"

Through the long hot hours the fight went on and still no signs of advance. From an eminence near the Temple in the Pass General Kuroki and his Staff, with whom was General Sir Ian Hamilton, looked on and received the reports of orderlies and gallopers. And always the sky was flecked with tiny white clouds and the hills in front spurted brown dust and clouds of smoke. Again the Russian gunners poured a quick fire of shrapnel into the batteries and drove the Japanese artillerymen to shelter.

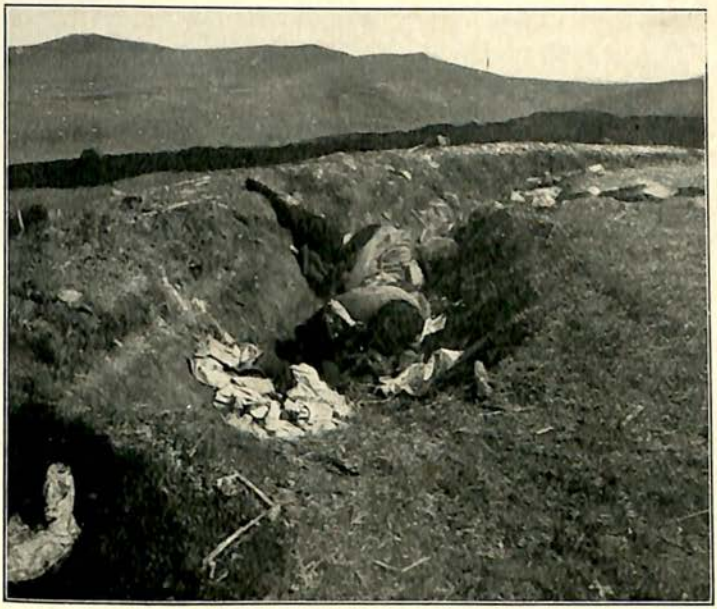
It was manifest that our shrapnel could not affect the enemy's positions: the range of the fuse was too

short. Shrapnel was accordingly abandoned for common shell, which has a longer range, and once more we witnessed the destructive effect of the high explosive that Japan has invented for the field gun.

The moment had arrived for decisive action. The centre must push forward and relieve the pressure on the left. At five o'clock the order was given and from behind the guns rose the ranks of the infantry. Descending the ridge they crossed the shallow stream before Tien-shu-tien and moved up the green slopes toward the enemy's position. As they advanced they opened out into two lines of extended order, so as to form two sides of a triangle. From a pyramid-shaped hill to the South of the white tower sprang another battalion. All day they had lain like brown stones on the brown slope—hidden from the enemy's view yet well within range of their guns. With a shout they descended into the valley, crossed the road, and, scaling a hill, threatened the right of the position at To-wan. The left was already menaced by the advance from the Pass through Tien-shu-tien. The Russian guns no longer spoke: they had begun to descend the hills in haste. The position was at our mercy, and the left was free to move. But caution was still necessary, for on a wooded hill commanding the advance stood a resolute body of men who seemed to have charmed lives. neither rifles nor plunging fire of shells could drive them from their trenches until they saw that the situation was indeed hopeless. Then only did they

retire and join their comrades on the way to Liao-yang.

The battle was ended and once more victory was with the Japanese. Yan-shu-ling, Tien-shu-tien and Yu-shu-ling—all the objectives were in our hands. The enemy still held a Pass five miles North, and our left flank bivouacked near in the hope of attacking next morning. But in the night the Russians withdrew and we halted at To-wan and Tien-shu-tien. Next day we heard that General Keller, who succeeded to this command after the passage of the Yalu, had been mortally wounded by a fragment of a shell while visiting one of the gun positions. Chinese reported that in the retirement the Russians carried two rich Chinese coffins from which it was inferred that two officers in high command had been killed. We also learned that General Kuropatkin was at Am-ping whence he had directed the operations. Two guns had been abandoned in the flight, and in the gun emplacements were many live shells. One of the guns lay on the Pekin road near To-wan. Its story was written on the upturned limber and the muzzle jammed hard against a tree at the foot of a steep hill. The gun was coming down the slope when the horses were shot or scared by rifle fire, and it went crashing down the height into the road. The breach block had been removed ; otherwise the gun was intact. Another gun had been hurled down a hill and had buried its muzzle deep into the earth ; the breach was open and in it was an unexploded shell. Of the



After the Fight.

The Red Cross at Work.

[*facing p.* 200

Russians 6 officers and 506 men were buried on the field, and 150 prisoners were taken, including the colonel of the 121st regiment. The Japanese casualties were 861—9 officers and 132 men killed; 33 officers and 687 men wounded.

From the presence of General Kuropatkin at Am-ping, and the despatch of a force down the Mukden road, it may be reasonably concluded that the Russians intended to deliver a counter attack on our right. No fewer than twenty-four battalions were directed against that flank which they hoped to crush by superior numbers. The attempt failed signally owing to the skill of the Japanese in manœuvring among the mountains and to the fortunate chance that placed the detachment from our centre in possession of the cliff under which the enemy was compelled to retire. On the right and centre the Russians fought well and showed greater energy and determination. But they were sadly wanting in initiative and enterprise.

A great soldier would have seized the opportunity when our left was held in check to deliver a counter attack on our right centre where there was a manifestly weak point. The distance between our centre and our right wing was great, and the only defence was a regiment of cavalry and one battalion in reserve. There appeared a clear opening for breaking through and turning our whole position. The advantages of situation, and of artillery were decidedly with the Russians. They had had weeks in which to prepare roads and

emplacements, and their guns were, for the most part, skilfully placed, though, as usual, they affected sky-lines, so that their fire was visible. The Japanese gun positions were not well chosen. This defect was due partly to the inferior range of their artillery, and partly to the extremely difficult nature of the country in which they were suddenly called upon to make selection. They, too, exposed their guns against the sky-line, not having learned thoroughly the lesson of indirect fire.

Chapter XXV

ATTACK ON YU-SHU-LING.

A DRAMATIC ENCOUNTER.

For dramatic incident, not less than tactical interest, the attack on Yu-shu-ling—to which reference has been made in describing the general advance on Liao-yang—is worthy of separate record. The action which ended disastrously for the Russians brought into relief the fighting qualities of the two armies, and proved once more that superior numbers, even when joined with desperate courage and strength of position, cannot avail against a skilful and determined foe. It may be urged that the element of chance entered into the victory, and that had it not been for the arrival of reinforcements from the centre, the Russians might have remained undisturbed behind the barrier which nature and military art opposed to the advance from the East. But chance is always a factor in war, and the greatest general is he who neglects no occasion for turning it to

account. Nor could the appearance of four battalions on the Russian flank be ascribed solely to chance. Their presence was designed, their purpose was to threaten the enemy's right, and their dramatic success was due to the neglect of a precaution as obvious as that which placed at the mercy of the Japanese the sleeping camp on the left wing. Until the occupation of Mou-tien-ling it might have been contended that in every encounter with General Kuroki's army the Russians were inferior in number, and were fighting in country peculiarly adapted to the soldiers of a mountainous island. This apology for defeat could be made no longer. Since that date the enemy had been in greater force; their artillery had been of greater weight and range and mobility; they had had the choice of positions, whether for attack or for defence, yet every engagement, offensive and defensive, showed more clearly their want of skill in manœuvring, in determination, in enterprise, and initiative. The absence of these qualities rendered of no avail the courage of the infantry and the skill of the gunners, whose sole achievement in the recent action had been to demonstrate that even Japanese soldiers might be checked by the rifle fire of unshaken infantry properly entrenched.

The attack on Yu-shu-ling was part of an operation that extended as far South as Hai-cheng, over a front of nearly seventy miles. Its effect must be judged by the success or failure of the whole movement, the purpose of which was to harass, if not to prevent, the retreat of

the main army under General Kuropatkin upon Liao-yang and Mukden. Yet, from a tactical point of view, the attack may be treated as a separate and an isolated engagement.

On the 19th of July the force composing our right wing drove the enemy from Chaotoa, twenty miles to the north of Mou-tien-ling, and proceeded to entrench themselves on the ridge West of this position. The right was our exposed flank, and General Inouye neglected no precaution to guard himself against surprise, keeping a vigilant eye on his front, where the enemy were in force, and on his right flank, about which hovered a brigade of Cossacks, who formed part of General Renenkampf's division. Toward the end of the month the Russians, who had entrenched on the heights beyond Yu-shu-ling on both sides of the river Tai-tsu, appeared to be concentrating for attack. Spies reported the arrival of reinforcements along the Mukden road, and unwonted activity in the camps about Yu-shu-ling. In order that he might not be taken unawares, General Inouye advanced his outposts in front of the enemy's flanks. On the 28th and 29th of July a company of infantry and a squadron of cavalry occupied Makura-yama or Pillow Mountain, facing the Russian position on the north bank of the Tai-tsu, while a detachment of infantry took possession of the heights of East Penlin, overlooking the valley on the other side of which was the enemy's right wing. On the 29th these outposts fell back on the main body entrenched on the range West

of Chaotoa, three Russian battalions having menaced Makura-yama and a considerable force having appeared on the West and North of East Penlin. The enemy was also in some strength at Pon-chi-ho, six miles north of Chaotoa on the road to Mukden, and a fight seemed imminent.

While our right wing was making ready to defend its position the order came for a general attack along the line from Hai-cheng to Yu-shu-ling. On the night of the 30th General Inouye disposed his force. The command of the right was given to General Kigoshi, who had under him six battalions of infantry, two squadrons of cavalry, one battery of field guns, and four batteries of mountain guns. On the left was General Sasaki with five battalions of infantry, one squadron of cavalry and one mountain battery, and in the centre remained General Inouye with three and a half battalions of infantry in reserve. Four battalions of infantry detached from the centre of the main army were to march from Shamatan, six miles North of Lien-cheng-kwan, to co-operate with the right wing and to seize the heights of West Penlin—the enemy's right flank position. The field of operations covered a mountainous country enclosed by two rivers, that flow into the Liao-yang river almost at right angles, and intersected by roads running to Mukden and Am-ping and Liao-yang. As the range begins here to descend into the plain about Liao-yang the mountains are not so lofty and precipitous as in the South and are more suitable for defensive

tactics. The Russian position was well chosen though it had one serious defect, inasmuch as it was divided by a broad and deep river. According to their habit, the centre was posted at the junction of two roads so as to give lateral communications. North of the Tai-tsu river the enemy held the summit and slope of a range of hills facing East and separated from the parallel range of Makura-yama by a narrow valley along which is a road. Here they camped under canvass in the corn fields to the West of the valley road. South of the Tai-tsu the Russians were entrenched on a range of hills running North and South and bending Eastward like a bow.

On the left of this position is the road from Chaotoa to Am-ping, and on each side of the road were guns commanding the approach from the East as well as the heights of Makura-yama, North of the river. Behind these artillery positions rose another hill on which was posted a battery with the same field of fire.

In all, the Russians had four field batteries of thirty-two guns opposed to one field battery of six guns and five mountain batteries of inferior weight and range. Behind the enemy's position, South of the Tai-tsu, was a broad plain covered with maize crops eight or nine feet high, bounded on the West by a river, and traversed by the road to Am-ping, through Lackanlei and Kuchaso. In front was the road from Penlin to Yu-shu-ling. This road runs along the bottom of a valley, shut in on the South by hills, and on the East by a ridge which extends North almost to Yu-shu-ling. East of this ridge is

another enclosed valley sown with maize, and East of that again another ridge, on the Northern spur of which was the Japanese gun position. Yet another cultivated valley divided this ridge from the entrenched range which ran North and South, the right flank overlooking the road to Am-ping and the river Tai-tsu, and the left flank resting on the road leading direct to Penlin.

Thus the two armies lay facing each other on the night of July 30th. At four o'clock on the morning of the next day the force on our right moved from its camp at Chaotoa, and fording the deep river advanced rapidly and silently upon Makura-yama. Under cover of a ridge that zigzags along the North bank of the Tai-tsu the Japanese reached the foot of the Pillow Mountain, and a battalion crept noiselessly up the peak. Below them lay the valley, and the slope of the Western hill dotted with white tents. Roused by the picquets, the Russians sprang from slumber with the cry "The enemy is upon us!" Men, scantily clad, ran hither and thither with rifles in their hands. Some were in their shirts, others in trousers and shirt; all were dazed by the unexpected attack. Forming in the cornfields two battalions hurried up the hill and came within ten yards of the crest, when the Japanese appeared and poured upon them a rain of bullets. The slope was quickly strewn with dead. Beyond that point advance was impossible. For thirty minutes the Russians fought hard; then they turned and fled down the hill into the valley and the cornfields pursued by a hailstorm of

lead. Throwing aside their weapons they took to their heels, leaving tents and carts and cooking wagons and equipment. Some fled South-west toward Am-ping; others Nort-west in the direction of Liao-yang, while some few brave men rallied and strove to renew the fight. In the valley and among the ripening corn lay three hundred slain Russian and many wounded. The camp was a litter of dead horses, rifles, books, papers, letters, great coats, sacks, cooking utensils, carts—all the paraphenalia of an army on the march. One thousand and eighteen tents fell into our hands.

The peak of Makura-yama was seized at five o'clock and at ten minutes to eight the ridge was occupied. Meanwhile the guns on both sides had opened at a range of between two and three thousand mètres. Little damage was done, the enemy failing to locate our batteries and firing in all directions. No sooner, however, did the Japanese infantry appear on the sky line above Makura-yama than the Russian artillery turned their attention to that quarter, and at a range of fifteen hundred mètres kept up a steady cannonade. Our right flank was powerless and could do nothing more than entrench and await developments. But they were not long idle. At ten o'clock the enemy appeared on the North-west of the ridge with the object of taking it from the rear. To meet this counter attack two companies were despatched from the reserves at Hoachapaozu—a village between Chaotoa and Yu-shu-ling—together with a detachment from the rear guard.

Fording the river they moved under cover of the zigzag range of hills and coming into the open were under the fire of the Russian guns. The officer in command of the reserves had his horse killed under him and was slightly wounded. While delivering the counter attack the Russians renewed their effort to assail the front with artillery and rifle, but the arrival of reinforcements appeared to damp their ardour, and after a short though sharp fight the Japanese were left in possession of Makura-yama.

During this long interval the centre and the left were not idle. A regiment advanced along the main road to Am-ping and drove the enemy from the Northern extremity of the ridge immediately in front of the Russian position south of the Tai-tsu. The resistance was feeble, but beyond that point the Japanese were unable to proceed. Below stretched a wide open plain dominated by the sheer precipice that guarded the enemy's front. To scale the cliff would require wings. Our centre accordingly determined to await developments elsewhere, and contented itself with containing the Russian front.

On our left was great activity and early promise of another disaster to the Russians. The force under General Sasaki left Hoachapaozu at half past three in the morning and marched South to the heights about Penlin. This is the name given to mountains that form the East, West and North boundaries of a triangular plain opening to the South. From East Penlin

General Sasaki saw the Russians erecting earthworks. Though ignorant of the enemy's strength and unfamiliar with the physical features of the country, he resolved to attack. Accordingly he led his troops across the valley to the foot of a gentle slope dotted with trees and scrub. Fortunately there were no guns to oppose his advance, but it was soon discovered that the Russians were in greater force than had been anticipated, and that the fight would be stubborn. The enemy were not entrenched, but had for breastwork the ridge of the hills, immediately below which ran a pathway. Our guns came to the aid of the infantry which was reinforced by one battalion, and the advance went on slowly and steadily. Suddenly the extreme right of the Russian force changed front to meet an unexpected attack from the South-east. Realising that powerful help was at hand and that the enemy were shaken by the unexpected menace to their rear, the Japanese pressed forward with the utmost speed. They raced up the hill shouting "Banzai!" and found the Russians already in retreat.

In order to explain this diversion on the enemy's right it is necessary to recall the fact that four battalions from the main centre were ordered to co-operate with the right wing at West Penlin. At eight o'clock in the morning these reinforcements arrived at Chobairai—an eminence on the South-west of West Penlin. Hearing the sound of heavy firing, and realising that the enemy's front was occupied, the commander resolved to strike

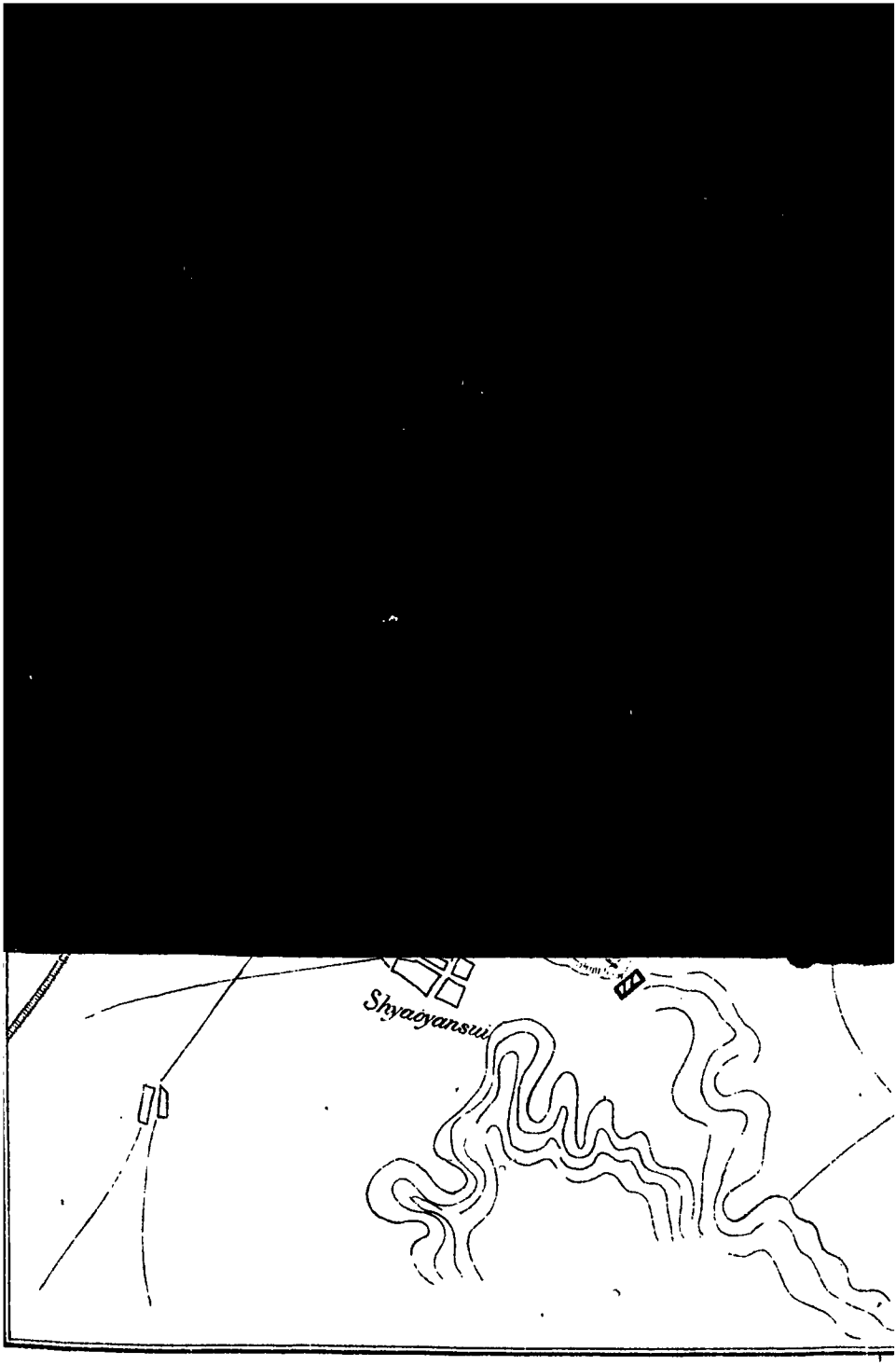
from the rear, and urged his troops through the Pass along the road to the back of West Penlin. Along this road the Russians were retreating in great confusion. Precipitous hills enclose the road along which they hurried like a flock of sheep. No precaution had been taken to secure these hills in order to cover the retirement. A Japanese lieutenant, running up the slope, beheld the enemy in the trap and signalled to his comrades to make haste. Then began another race for life. The Russians saw the danger and sought to avert it by seizing the commanding position. Throwing aside great coats and every impedimenta they strove with every nerve and sinew to outstrip their competitors in the race. But they were too late. The Japanese, having dropped their knapsacks, were already lining the cliff overhanging the road and emptying their rifles into the struggling mass below.

Shouts of "Banzai!" mingled with the rattle of musketry. It was a scene of the wildest excitement. For the enemy below there was no escape: they must run this fiery gauntlet. To attempt any reply with rifles was impossible, for the Japanese were sheltered by the ledge of the cliff. In a few moments the road was strewn with the dead and dying. Ambulance wagons came to pick up the wounded and the Japanese chivalrously suspended fire though no white flag had been raised. Under cover of the Red Cross the Russians carried away their wounded, together with many rifles and great coats. Yet three hundred dead

were buried by the Japanese, whose casualties were not a dozen. Among the wounded was Lieut. R. Nishii, who was the first to reach the cliff and to signal to his comrades.

At noon the range from which the enemy had retired was occupied by the Japanese, and the battalions from the centre went in pursuit, but were checked by guns stationed at Rihikoku and Kuchazu on the North Road. At three o'clock the Russian right flank had disappeared, leaving the centre undisturbed, and the left flank seriously weakened. Later in the afternoon another attempt was made to drive the Japanese from Makura-yama. A small force again appeared on the North-west of the position, but the counter attack no longer had the full support of the artillery beyond Yu-shu-ling, some of the guns having been withdrawn to Kuchazu. The attack was a half-hearted affair, and was easily repelled. Meanwhile, our left flank made strenuous effort to drive the enemy from their strong position in the centre, and succeeded in capturing two peaks. But the valley was deep and exposed, and the mountain was steep. The assault was accordingly put off till to-morrow, and the victorious Japanese bivouacked in battle array before the last Russian position. At dawn they arose to renew the encounter, and found the enemy retiring. Our left flank was the first to discover the movement, and, hurrying up the heights, saw the Russian infantry streaming along the road through Laokanlei in the direction of Am-ping.

In this engagement the Russians had 39 battalions of infantry, 32 guns, 12,000 cavalry, two companies of engineers, and three balloons. Their casualties were over 2,000. 600 bodies were buried on the field, and more than 200 prisoners were taken. Among the spoils were 800 rifles, 20,000 rounds of rifle ammunition, 400 engineers tools, 1,018 tents, three cooking carts, six ammunition wagons, 1,400 sacks of clothing and camp equipment. From the diary of an officer we learned that General Kuropatkin was at Am-ping on the 23rd and 24th July, and was expected on the 31st to direct the operations in front of General Kuroki's army. The Japanese casualties were 416, of whom fourteen officers were wounded and two killed.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LIAO-YANG

1/50,000

DRAWN BY A JAPANESE OFFICER.

Chapter XXVI

THE BATTLE OF LIAO-YANG.

PREPARING THE WAY.

During the last days of August every soldier felt that he was nearing the end of the first phase of the war, and that a decisive battle was impending. Three armies were concentrating upon Liao-yang, which General Kuropatkin had fortified and provisioned to withstand prolonged assault.

After the fight at Mou-tien-ling General Kuroki halted to complete his preparations for the advance on Liao-yang. The rainy season, though unusually short, gave some trouble, and for a time the position of the First Army was by no means secure. Each division was widely separated and extended over a broad front. Half the Guards Division was still at Siou-yen, miles to the left rear, while the Twelfth Division on the

right flank was several miles from the centre and not in touch. This distribution of the force could not be avoided, for the main road to Liao-yang is too narrow to permit the simultaneous movement of two divisions.

General Keller seized this critical moment to deliver his attack on Mou-tien-ling, but failed owing to the want of energy and determination. As the month of August drew near Russian activity increased, and on the 25th of July the Twelfth Division was menaced by the advance of two infantry divisions and six thousand cavalry, who were riding from the neighbourhood of Ponchiho.

Deeming it imprudent to await attack in so divided a position, General Kuroki resolved to become the assailant and to strike the enemy while their preparations were incomplete. The Guards at Siou-yen were hurried to Head-quarters, and the lines of communication were swept for men to strengthen the Twelfth Division on the right. In five days General Kuroki was ready to make his counter stroke, and To-wan, or the valley of the White Tower, was captured.

The occupation of this important military position removed the peril that had long threatened the First Army. The Second Division in the centre was now free to move to the support of either flank, and to hold its front with a comparatively small force. At the same time the right flank near Ponchiho was strengthened by men drawn from the second reserves, and the road was opened to Liao-yang.

Unfortunately, General Kuroki was not able to take full and immediate advantage of this improvement in his position. He was only a pawn in the game. The Central or Fourth Army was not ready to move. It awaited reinforcements of infantry and artillery to extend the line toward Hai-cheng, and two weeks were necessary to complete its preparations.

Field Marshal Oyama's intention was to begin the assault on Liao-yang on August 18th, but again the rains descended and the movement was delayed until the 25th. The instructions issued from Grand Head Quarters were that General Kuroki should attack the enemy on the left bank of the Tan-ho which flows in front of Am-ping, while the combined armies of the West assailed the position at Anshantien. The date fixed for the movement against Anshantien was August 28th, and in order that the flanking attack might be developed in time, General Kuroki proceeded on the 26th to sweep the enemy from his front. This was a most difficult operation. The main force of the Russians was on the line Am-ping, Shanleishi, Tohi and Shankaen, with its left flank near Housalien—not an easy position to assail. Its centre near Daitenshi was naturally strong and had been fortified with earthworks upon which the enemy had been engaged since the month of May.

The weakness of the Russian position was its extended front and the comparative smallness of the force with which it was held. Of this defect General

Kuroki was quick to take advantage. Accordingly he gave orders that both flanks were to be threatened, while a desperate night assault was delivered against the centre.

The orders issued from the Head Quarters of the First Army are interesting and instructive :

"Kinchapoatsa,
"5 p.m. August 22nd.

(1) "The enemy in front of the First Army is composed of the IX and XXXI Divisions and the greater part of the III and VI Divisions. Its line extends from Kosalin through Kampalei and Kynchorei to Daitenshi and Daisoton. At Ponchiho are a regiment of infantry, six squadrons of cavalry, and a few guns. At Liao-yang and on the right bank of the Tai-tsu is a superior force of the enemy.

(2) "The Second and Fourth Armies expect to deliver their attack on the position from Anshantien to West Togyoho—eight kilometres West—and Kami-sekyo on the 28th inst.

(3) "The First Army will attack with its main force in the direction of Am-ping, and with parts of its force on the Liao-yang road.

(4) "The Twelfth Division, plus the mixed brigade of the Second Reserve and minus the mountain battery, will attack in the direction of Hichihanlei at dawn on the 26th.

(5) "The Second Division, minus one field battery and one regiment of cavalry and plus the mountain battery of the Twelfth Division, will attack South-west of Tsuego and Chorei before dawn on the 26th.

(6) "The Imperial Guards Division, plus one regiment of cavalry and one battery of field guns, will attack Daitenshi on the Liao-yang main road at dawn on the 26th.

(7) "The G.O.C. will be found at Santolei after 6 p.m. on the 25th."

The strength of the Twelfth Division was equal to one and a half divisions; that of the Second Division was about normal, though half its artillery and the

greater part of its cavalry had been transferred to the Guards Division. A battery of mountain guns had however been added to the Second Division, and proved so effective that the Japanese resolved in future to carry a mountain battery behind the fighting line. The Guards Division, in addition to the cavalry and guns of the Second Division, was strengthened by a battery of Russian guns captured at the Yalu, and had in all ten batteries of field guns. Besides these forces was the Reserve—whose position was kept secret—under the direct command of Head Quarters. This reserve—the 29th regiment of the Second Reserves—was doing garrison duty at Feng-hoang-cheng on the 22nd when orders came that it must hurry to the front. After a forced march of forty-eight hours the regiment arrived at Tien-sui-tien at midnight on the 25th and was thrown into the fighting line. No one who saw them marching to the sound of the guns next morning would have dreamed that they had just performed so remarkable a feat of endurance.

Such was the force with which General Kuroki succeeded in driving in the Russian left flank and compelling General Kuropatkin to evacuate Aushantien and fall back on his last defences about Liao-yang. Let me attempt to describe as clearly and as concisely as the multiplicity of details allow, the manner in which this great victory was won.

In the last days of August, the army under General Kuropatkin, estimated at two hundred thousand fighting

men, held three defensive lines stretching like bows over the hilly country to the South and East of Liao-yang. The longest bow was drawn to the South of Am-ping across the Pekin road ; the shorter was North of the River Tang, while the smallest and strongest bow masked Liao-yang from the low hills of Shou-shan. The defensive works in front of the Pekin road had been constructed months before, those in the neighbourhood of Am-ping were begun after our advance from Mou-tien-ling on the 31st of July. The nature and extent of the defences beyond the Tang-ho were not known until a few days before the attack on Liao-yang ; nor were we sure that the enemy had entrenched the heights of Sou-shan. Divided into two main bodies, with strong reserves on the inner lines of defence, the Russians awaited our advance with the confidence inspired by numbers and by the presence of General Kuropatkin. Our plan was simple. While the Armies of the West and South attacked from Anshantien on the road from Hai-cheng, the Army of the East, under General Kuroki, was to force the defensive line on the Pekin road and at Am-ping.

Late in the afternoon of August 25th we left Tien-sui-tien—the village near the foot of Mou-tien-ling Parr, where we had camped for nearly one month. Our orders were to march with three days' rations in our saddle bags and to halt for the night in a glen four miles to the North-west. We bivouacked among the mealies near a mountain torrent, and rose at dawn with the

consciousness that important events had happened in the night. Before starting from Tien-sui-tien we were told that no match was to be struck, no pipe or fire was to be lighted, and that restive and noisy horses were to be kept in the rear. These precautions could only portend some desperate enterprise under cover of darkness.

Forcing a path through the tangle of bush that dripped with heavy dew, we reached the summit of a ridge and looked across the boundless ocean of bare hills. Away to the right loomed a bold spur in the shadow of which flowed the Tang-ho. Here the column, which formed our right flank, was operating, though of its progress we saw no sign and heard no sound. The heights on our left echoed the thunders of artillery, telling us that our left flank had forced the Pass of Yang-shu-ling and was hotly engaged. General Kuroki and his Staff watched from the ridge to which we had ascended. Across a deep valley on the North ran another steep ridge upon which stood General Nichi and his Staff. Here was the centre of our advance.

The Russian line of defence, in front of which we found ourselves, was strong by nature, and had been improved by art. It stretched across hills, offering an extensive field of fire, and must be approached by deep and exposed valleys. One weakness, however, it had, and the Japanese were not slow to discover it. The line was too long to be strongly defended, even by the force at General Kuropatkin's command. On an extended front the point for attack is the centre, and here General

Kuroki determined to drive in a wedge that would leave the enemy no choice but to fall back on his second line beyond the river.

Artillery positions not being available owing to the precipitous character of the country, he resolved upon the hazardous expedient of a night attack with the bayonet. To ensure the success of such an enterprise two conditions are essential. The ground over which the troops are to advance in the darkness must be carefully studied. With that object many reconnaisances were made, company after company being sent out to learn the topographical features of the two mountains over which the assault must pass. In the second place, it is necessary to provide the enemy's flanks with work that will prevent them from giving effectual aid to the centre. This duty was assigned to the forces on our flanks. Taking with them half the field guns of the Central Column, our left wing marched from To-wan on August 22nd through the Pass of Yang-shu-ling, drove in the enemy's outposts on the Pekin road, and on the morning of the 25th began their attack on the strong postion of Al-tan-ho, or Two River roads. Our right wing was ordered to assault the Pass at Han-pa-ling on the Am-ping road and to seize the position held by the Russian left, while a brigade was detached to contain the force of seven or eight thousand left by the enemy at Pon-chi-ho to guard the road to Mukden and, if practicable, to create a diversion on our right rear.

These were the dispositions of General Kuroki's army on the night of August 25th, when the assault was made against the Russain centre at Kuchorai, or Bowstring Pass. In front of this position were two ridges held by the Russian outposts. The movement for the night attack began at nine o'clock and at midnight the first position was taken. But the really difficult task remained. At half-past two the stillness of the night was unbroken save by the wolf-like bark of pariahs. Hill and valley were wrapped in deep slumber that precedes the dawn and the moon had veiled herself in darkness.

Suddenly the fields of giant maize and millet were stirred as by a breeze. Yet no wind blew from any point on the black horizon. Ghostly forms flitted across the valley. At first a score, the number swelled into legions, until it seemed as if all the graves of all the townships had given up their dead and an army of shades was marching through space. Not a sound was heard—no footfall, not a breath. Yet fifteen thousand men were advancing with rifle in hand and desperate purpose in their hearts. Swiftly and in silence they moved until they gained the foot of the heights. Then they glided upward, still swiftly and in silence. A shot rang out, piercing the night with a shrill note of alarm, and a tidal wave of humanity, rising from earth, swept onward and upward with irresistible fury. Nothing could withstand that steel-crested wave. Not a shot was fired. The position was won. It was a magnificent

feat of arms, which the Japanese declare is without parallel—a whole division of infantry charging in the night with the bayonet. Swept off their feet by this stupendous assault, the Russians rallied at a point not far distant and appeared to be preparing a counter attack. The mountain battery borrowed from our right wing had followed hard on the heels of the division, and, coming into action at close range, quickly dislodged the enemy and put an end to all fear of counter-assault.

The success of this onslaught in the darkness may be ascribed to the vigour and secrecy with which it was delivered. Not a single foreign *attaché* or correspondent who slept upon the wet ground that night with only a a blanket round him dreamed that a stupendous struggle was raging on the other side of the mountain. Some credit also is due to the divisions co-operating on the flanks.

In order to reach their position on the 26th the Guards Division began their advance three days before. The roads were quagmires, and had to be made good for the passage of field guns. Reaching Karoko on the morning of the 23rd the fighting force repaired the road, and on the following day came to the high ground North-west of Henkowan, and South of Sanuipu where it encountered three battalions of Russian infantry from Daisotung and a smart skirmish took place. On the 25th, after another contact with the enemy, the division advanced to the appointed line of Heilintzu. The Guards having begun their march a little earlier than

the rest of the army, General Kuropatkin withdrew part of his force from Am-ping and Liao-yang, and strengthened his army to meet the attack on the main road. This movement, while endangering the position of the Guards, proved to be of benefit to the general plan of the Japanese, for it relieved the pressure on the Twelfth Division. Four battalions of this division—the the Unizawa Brigade—had been ordered to Kiao-tao to protect the right flank against a force of the enemy coming from Ponchiho, while the main body of the division advanced from Yu-shu-ling, and assumed the offensive at dawn on the 26th, after the attack made by the Second Division. The reason for this was obvious. The country in front of the Twelfth Division was especially difficult, and they were in close contact with the main force of the Russians, who occupied a very strong position. Any advance of the Second Division would, therefore, be useful to the Twelfth Division, whose mountain guns meanwhile were able to harass the enemy.

The situation on the left flank did not improve, and threatened to become critical, for the enemy continued to strengthen his front. General Kuroki accordingly despatched his reserves to reinforce the Guards. This decision was arrived at after the most careful deliberation, and was fraught with immediate consequences that menaced the advance of the Second Division. Scarcely had the reserves moved away to the assistance of the Guards than the enemy delivered a vigorous counter

attack against the left flank of the Second Division. This movement was unexpected. It was too late, however, to recall the reserves, and General Kuroki had no choice but to order the Guards Division instantly to press their attack on the left, in the hope that this would lighten the unforeseen strain on his centre.

Though successful in the night attack, the Second Division had not been able to make the immediate advance anticipated. On the other side of a narrow valley, fronting the ridge which had been carried at the point of the bayonet, ran another ridge with a razor like summit flanked by conical peaks and traversed by a buttress of rock descending almost at right angles from the enemy's trenches. There the Russians, re-inforced from Am-ping and covered by guns that kept up a heavy bombardment, made an obstinate defence.

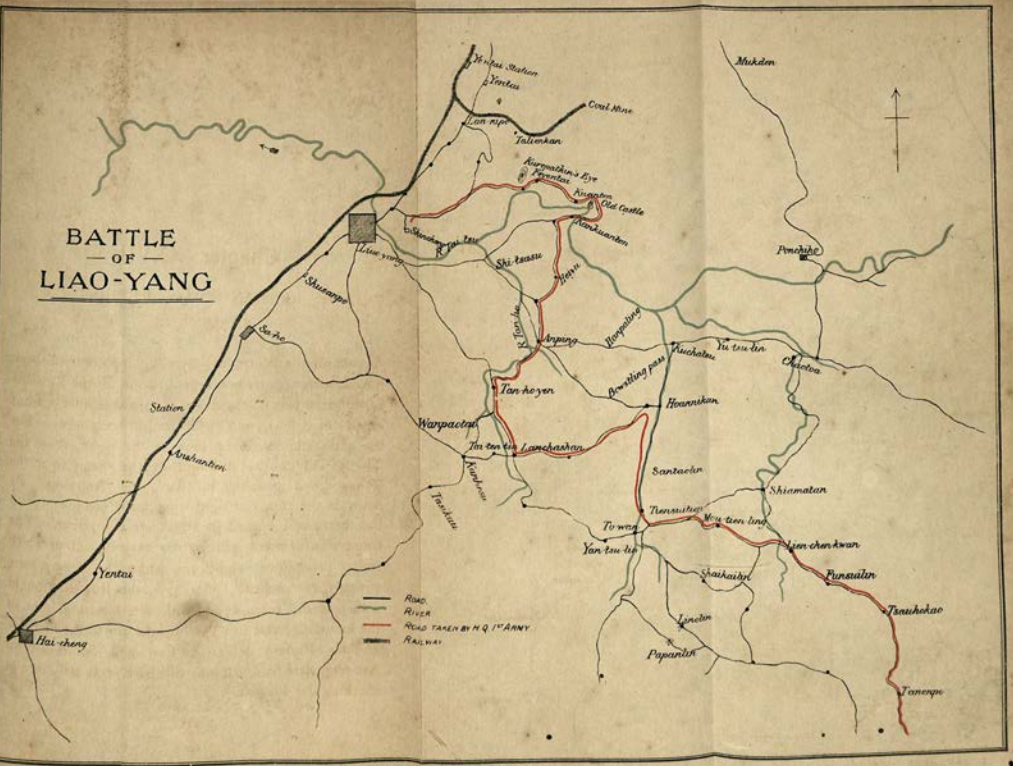
From the hill in front I watched the Japanese infantry as they moved slowly and cautiously up the slope toward the buttress of rock, while another body of riflemen advanced from the left and four mountain guns were visible on the sky line to the right. The day was hot and many of the soldiers had laid aside their tunics so that the slope was dotted with white sleeves that made every step and every figure clear against the greens and browns. Steadily the infantry advanced, taking cover and extending until they gained the shelter of the buttress of rock from behind which they opened a fusilade against the trenches between the conical peaks. Their fire was hotly returned, and the shells of field guns

in the valley beyond began to search the slope near the mountain guns. For two hours the situation was unchanged, each side holding its own and maintaining its fire. After a time the Russian guns compelled the mountain battery to retire a little down the slope where two guns were directed to keep down the fire from the trenches and two guns among the mealies in the valley covered the advance of the rifles. The effect was magical. In a few minutes the fusilade slackened ; the Japanese seized the opportunity to press forward, and before noon the flag of the Rising Sun shone blood red on the summit. The wedge of steel had been driven hard and fast into the heart of the enemy.

Chapter XXVII

THE RUSSIAN ARMY RETIRES ON LIAO-YANG.

ALTHOUGH the centre of their right flank had been forced, there appeared no urgent reason for the Russians to withdraw beyond the river. There were hills in front capable of defence, and our losses had been heavy. For the explanation we must look to the right, where the Twelfth Division was driving back the enemy upon the Tang-ho and menacing his flank near Am-ping. At dawn on the 26th our right wing made connexion with the centre and opened its attack on Hanyaling. The country is furrowed with narrow ravines, out of which spring precipitous heights, on which the enemy were strongly entrenched. Moreover, the Russians fought with splendid courage, and with determination born of the knowledge that this Pass was the key to the first line of their Eastern defence. East and South-east of Am-ping were field batteries that gave great assistance in checking our advance.



DRAWN BY A JAPANESE OFFICER.

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"Do you think you will take the position to-day?" asked a foreign *attaché*, speaking to a private.

The soldier hesitated, after the manner of the Japanese.

"Yes; I think so. But to-day the Russians are very obstinate!"

Dense fog hid the enemy late in the afternoon, and the movement was suspended. Yet through the night a fierce struggle went on for possession of a ridge on which the Russians, deeming the height unassailable, had posted a field battery. It was rash, however, to set limits to the capacity of mountaineers like those in General Inouye's command. The hill was stormed; was defended with stones and avalanches of rock, and was captured. From the summit the victors hurled stones upon the enemy, whose energies were concentrated on flight, and both slopes were quickly strewn with dying men. The wounds inflicted by the rocks were terrible, and the mortality was greater than it could have been from rifle fire. Two counter attacks were made and repulsed, and seven field guns of the latest pattern fell into the hands of the Japanese. When darkness put an end to the fight this was the state of affairs:—The Russian centre and left were withdrawing to their second line beyond the Tang-ho, leaving a force among the lower hills to cover the retirement, and their right was falling slowly back along the Pekin road. Our right was pressing hard on the enemy's flank; our centre occupied the position evacuated by the Russians, and our left was

preparing to follow up the advantage with a vigorous bombardment, when rain and mist descended upon the battlefield.

At eleven o'clock next morning the enemy began to retire across the Tang-ho under cover of guns posted South-east of Am-ping. The movement was cleverly made, and the spectacle was one of the most remarkable witnessed during the war.

For five long months we had lived in the mountains. Day after day we had toiled and sweated up the hill-sides, and always our vision had been bounded by a narrow horizon. We had grown weary of prison ranges and a world that was a tumultuous sea of green. We panted for the freedom of the plains, for a distant horizon and unfettered vision. And here they lay before us. It was on the morning of August 27th that we had our first glimpse of the great plain that stretches North to the fringe of the Gobi desert. It looked unreal—a mirage of yellow and green fading into infinite space. The mountain on which we stood, among gruesome evidences of the combat, was veiled in mist that rolled aside like a curtain and revealed the panorama of hill and valley. Bending like a bow to the East the river Tang gleamed like an opal set in narrow bands of emerald and gold. Along the near bank moved dark lines of men and horses and wagons, stretching for miles till they vanished behind the spur of a hill, and crossing over by a bridge, reappeared on the plain beyond. In an unbroken stream they flowed

past the white tents in the bed of the river and vanished once more among the trees of a village on the plain. From the mountains about Am-ping descended tributary rivulets of men and horses, and away to our right tiny clouds of white vapour on the dark slopes and crest showed that the Japanese were encouraging them to flight. What a target they made, and what havoc might have been wrought by a few well-placed guns of long range! How great would have been the spoils! How complete the victory! Again and again did the Japanese bemoan the fate that had given them guns of short range and light projectile. Pursuit was out of the question, for the enemy, conscious of immunity from shell fire, concentrated his force with exasperating deliberation, being fully alive to the fact that in their present formation the Japanese would never venture to follow. All we could do was to look upon the spectacle, and moralise on the subject of long range artillery.

We had driven the enemy across the Tang-ho, but they still held the heights North and West of Am-ping and had a second line of defensive works beyond the river. A great change, however, had come over the whole situation. The armies of the West and South had encountered the Russians at Anshantien and found them loth to venture on a decisive issue. At half-past six o'clock on the evening of August 27th, General Kuroki received the following message from Field Marshall Oyama :—"The enemy at Anshantien has begun to retire. This may be the effect of the First

Army's attack on its flank. I have given orders to the Second and Fourth Armies to pursue." Upon this came another communication from Grand Head Quarters :—"The retreat of the enemy is confirmed. The Second and Fourth Armies are pursuing." Before the advancing legions of Japan the enemy were fleeing toward Liao-yang and their last defences.

The news was startling, for it had long been known that the Russians had made defensive works at Anshantien, where they were expected to offer a stubborn resistance. That they should abandon this strong position without a struggle was proof that the First Army had done its work well, and had inspired the enemy with fear lest Anshantien might be turned. The situation called for prompt and energetic action. If the Russians had made up their minds to evacuate Liao-yang and to fall back upon Mukden without striking a blow there was imminent risk that all our schemes and sacrifices of the last three months would come to naught and that our prey would escape the net spread for him. Liao-yang without Russian guns and captives would be a poor reward at the end of five months' successful campaigning. Two alternatives presented themselves. By overtaking the enemy we might compel him to accept battle at Liao-yang, or we might engage him in a rear guard action and detach a strong force to cross the Tai-tsu and strike North at his communications. The position demanded a General of daring and resource.

Having withdrawn to their entrenched line at Shou-shan the Russians were content with holding the defences North of the Tang-ho only long enough to ensure the orderly retirement of their forces in the neighbourhood of Am-ping. General Kuroki gave instant orders for the occupation of the line from the North-east of Sobyoshi to Kosanshi through Daisekimon. This advance met with feeble opposition. Our work on the 28th of August was comparatively easy. We were in possession of the South bank of the river, with our centre a little way to the West of Am-ping, and our left wing established across the Pekin road.

On the morning of the 28th I rode toward Am-ping to witness the passage of the Tang-ho and found myself within fifteen hundred yards of the Russian trenches. In the valley behind me, sheltered by a precipitous mountain slope, was a Japanese field battery, and half a mile in front of it, among some trees near a rocky mound, were two batteries, the fire of which was directed against a bold ridge on the opposite side of the river. No enemy was visible, though the trenches could be seen, and an officer on the hill before me signalling to the batteries. By the way, the Japanese have many things to learn in the art of communication on the battle field. They never use the heliograph, and only twice have I seen signalling by flags. The range and direction of the guns were shouted along a line of men posted at regular intervals on the slope and in the valley—a slow and cumbersome process. The shelling

continued, and suddenly out of the trenches rose a considerable number of the enemy. who fled up the hill pursued by shrapnel that did little harm. Away on the left front a similar incident happened, though in this case nearly a battalion was dislodged and had to climb slowly up a precipice, where they offered a splendid target. Once more shrapnel demonstrated how ineffective it can be even at close range. A single common shell would have done more damage than scores of rounds of shrapnel.

Before noon our troops had marched through Am-ping and crossed the Tang-ho at a deep ford. Am-ping is a type of all Chinese towns and has a very prosperous appearance. The houses are substantially built, and those of the merchants are surrounded with high walls, loop-holed and crennelated for defence against bandits and raiders. General Kuropatkin had lodged in the largest of these houses two or three days before and drank tea in the courtyard surrounded by flowers. The town escaped occupation by the Japanese, for at noon General Kuroki received the following orders :— "First Army sweep the enemy from its front and prepare to cross to the right bank of the Tai-tsu as quickly as possible. Second and Fourth Armies expect to attack Liao-yang, taking the positions Sofanton, Otoen, Shaka, and eight kilometres North-west of Shaka."

Chapter XXVIII

THE ASSAULT ON LIAO-YANG.

On the morning of August 30th, when we looked down upon Liao-yang we believed that this city of the plain would be the Sedan of Manchuria. A crescent of steel was drawn about it, and armed men were threatening on every side. Yet Liao-yang, unconscious of impending doom, lay silent and unmoved. We had climbed a mountain on the East and saw the plain—a great expanse of brown fields and grass with dark patches of wood. On the North ran the broad river, in whose embrace nestled the city. Grey walls, five miles in circumference, enclosed much cultivated land and many houses, above the dark roofs of which towered a pagoda dedicated to eight incarnations of Buddha. And beyond the walls was another and a newer city—European in aspect—an ugly straggling line of brick houses and stores, with a railway station, towards which a train moved leisurely from the North over a bridge across the river. In five months this was our first evidence of permanent Russian occupation. Upon the flats South of the town were

lines of earthworks and two redoubts that looked like fortresses, and further South was a line of low hills—the entrenched position or Shou-shan. From the centre of this line rose a grey mass of rock broken and precipitous, and separated from it on the East by the main road to Hai-cheng was a low hill with three broad peaks that was to be the scene of one of the most bloody encounters in the war.

The stillness that brooded over city and plain was charged with portent. A struggle—among the most terrific in a quarter of a century—was about to shake the mountains and devastate the plain as with some mighty convulsion of nature. Yet only to the eye of experience was any sign revealed. Save for a column of smoke near the base of the pagoda the town looked deserted. Over the plain wandered small bodies of men and horse, and on the river flats, where the Tang joins the Tai-tsu, was a force of infantry and artillery guarding the approach from the East. The hills were too far off to betray their occupants, yet we knew that on the crescent line of ridges was a great Russian army, and that on the plain and in the hills beyond were the legions of the Mikado.

The strength of the enemy was estimated at six army corps or two hundred thousand men. General Kuropatkin's reason for withdrawing to the defences about Liao-yang is clearly stated in his official despatch to the Czar. His line of retreat along the Tang river was threatened by General Kuroki, while his left flank at

Anshantien was endangered by another turning movement. "In order to save time and inflict severe losses on the enemy, I withdrew all the army corps from advanced positions to Liao-yang." The retirement was attended with many difficulties. "In consequence of the mountainous nature of the country on our front and the bad condition of the roads toward the South, the two days' march toward Liao-yang was of the most difficult kind, and only the devotion of all the troops on the East front enabled it to be carried out in good order. Only after incredible difficulties was it found possible to drag all the guns, without exception, and all our baggage through the passes. Some of the guns were carried through the mountains by infantry. Difficult as was the retreat through the passes under pressure from the enemy, the march across the open country was still more arduous. The left and centre columns succeeded in getting all their artillery and baggage to Liao-yang. The march of the right column, which was obliged to cross Westward to the railway, where the country had suffered more severely from rains, was especially difficult. Considerable forces of the enemy followed the rear guard, which maintained a stubborn resistance. The guns of one of the retiring batteries began to sink in the mud. Every effort was made to save them. Twenty-four horses were hitched to each piece, companies of infantry assisting with ropes. The horses and men, however, sank so deep that it was necessary for the comrades of the latter to haul them out. General

Rutkovsky remained so long covering the extrication of the guns, that his forces lost heavily, and the General himself and Colonel Raben, commanding the Fourth Regiment of East Siberian Sharpshooters, were killed. Notwithstanding all efforts, it was finally necessary to abandon the guns. On August 29th, the army concentrated at Liao-yang. One corps took a position on the right bank of the Tai-ten river, while another held the left bank."

The strongest point in the Russian defences was Shou-shan, a rocky eminence 300 feet high, four miles South-west of the city, on the summit of which stands a beacon tower built by the Chinese in olden times. Along its North-eastern foot winds the main road to Liao-yang, while the railway passes under the Western slope. The South side of the hill is enclosed by rugged heights, and on the East are three hills on which the enemy had constructed triple lines of trenches connected with a covered bomb-proof way. In front of the position stretched a perfect maze of defensive works—barbed wire entanglements, *troups de loups*, deep pits with a sharp stake to impale any unfortunate, *chevaux de frise*, and all the strange and terrible devices of the military engineer.

The attack opened at dawn with a prolonged artillery duel, the details of which were unfolded before us like a panorama, and recalled that volcanic valley through which you pass to the King country in New Zealand. All day long shells charged with death

moaned through the air; the angry snarl of shrapnel mingled with the roar of common shell; tiny clouds of white appeared in the heavens and dissolved in a hail of bullets; and slope and crest and plain spurted fountains of black earth. Liao-yang seemed to have become the centre of every form of volcanic activity. Hundreds of guns were engaged, including many of long range and heavy calibre. Several Russian batteries were posted on the plain in strong and well-masked emplacements. From a semi-circle of earthworks to the South-east darted tongues of white flame, revealing the position of sixteen guns; further South near a grove were more batteries; in a ravine at the foot of the grey mass of rock were eight guns; Westward, on the plain, sixteen pieces were in vigorous action.

So much could be seen from our mountain, yet it was but a small part of the artillery with which the enemy strove to silence our guns and to check our advance. On their left alone the Russians were reported to have one hundred guns. Their fire was directed mainly to the hills on our right, where some of our batteries were posted, and battalions of infantry were waiting the order to advance. On the plain in front of the range of hills that formed the enemy's defence are three hamlets sheltered by dark groves. Here was the first line of Japanese infantry, and to these points also the shells flew fast and furious. The cannonade was maintained without pause, and grew in intensity till it seemed as if all the powers of Hell had broken loose

and were wrecking the world with fire and thunder. After a time the Japanese gunners began to locate the enemy's batteries, and their fire became more concentrated; but the shells fell short and not a gun was silenced.

Again, and again, and again, sharp tongues of flame darted out of the brown plain, and the hills were wreathed in smoke. Late in the day a little progress seemed to have been made, for the hurricane swept nearer and nearer to the city, which looked so peaceful amid all the turmoil and strife.

Despite this tremendous bombardment our infantry was unable to advance. The army of the South, under General Nozu—a famous fighting General—strove to drive back the Russian left flank. Three divisions—one in the centre drawn from the army of the West—opened fire on the positions at Heinytchoan and Shinryuton, where the enemy had forty guns behind strong earthworks. Again and again the infantry tried to move forward under cover of the artillery, but were met by a fierce cannonade from front and flank, and had to seek the shelter of the hills. Our right and centre succeeded in advancing a few hundred yards, but they lacked the support expected from the division detached from General Kuroki's army, which had not yet gained its appointed place. Occupying the lower ground, and fronting nearly one hundred guns—some of them fifteen centimetre guns—they suffered severely. Our left took the position near Tsuafauton, but came under

direct and enfilading artillery fire, and was compelled to fall back after dark, notwithstanding that the whole of the reserve went to its aid. At five o'clock General Nozu's batteries were reinforced from the left, and the Russians were subjected to a concentrated and continuous bombardment. But the enemy fought with skill and determination, and the situation was unchanged. At midnight the cannonade was renewed, and continued at intervals, lighting the dark hours with lurid fires.

The battle began again at dawn. Finding it impossible to move forward, the division on our right had made trenches and sungars, where they awaited reinforcements from General Kuroki. This supporting force had great difficulties to overcome, and, after a night attack against superior numbers North of Muchapoa, ran short of ammunition, and could not move. Meanwhile a battery was posted near Sauchazui, and opened fire on the enemy. On our left General Oku met with desperate resistance; the supply of ammunition was rapidly running out; the men could not advance, and help was sought from the centre. Two divisions co-operated in a determined attack, the left moving steadily forward in a hurricane of shot and shell that destroyed nearly a whole battalion. Still the enemy held fast to the main position, and, making shelter trenches, our men waited anxiously for darkness.

During all this struggle the city lay calm and undisturbed. Clouds of smoke again rose near the base of the pagoda, and on the North-west a village was on

fire. Trains crossed the railway bridge and steamed into the station or Northward across the plain. On the flats East of the town and close to the river, Russian infantry and cavalry still guarded the approach from Am-ping. It was clear that the enemy expected some movement in that direction, for in the afternoon a battery of field guns with a force of cavalry and riflemen made a reconnaisance toward the road. Advancing cautiously in two files the cavalry-appeared on the bank of the river and drew rein; the guns took position among the trees near a village, and the infantry halted behind. But nothing could be discovered to arouse suspicion, and presently they returned. Had they been better informed they might have been bolder, for the hills were held by a few military *attachés* and foreign correspondents, and in the ravines were only some strong picquets. But they were content with searching our mountain with shrapnel, and driving us from the sky line, where we had no business. As the shadows lengthened, the cannonade, which had been desultory and comparatively feeble in the earlier hours, burst forth with violence.

Chapter XXIX

CAPTURE OF LIAO-YANG.

THE supreme moment was at hand. Thousands who lay down to rest in the trenches were destined never again to look on the face of the sun. The night was clear and no sound of strife broke the stillness. Worn out with fatigue and excitement and exposure, the soldier slept with rifle at his side. A truce had been proclaimed—the truce of the night—and darkness shrouded the dead. It was the profound calm that heralds the storm. Already preparations were being made for the great assault that was to drive the enemy from his position before Liao-yang. Engineers were at work removing obstacles with which the Russians had strewn the path. Their efforts were directed especially to the hill in front of the village named Shyaoyansui—the low hill with three broad crests and a gentle slope from the South. Three or four hundred yards from the foot of this slope ran a triple line of *trous de loups* or circular pits ten feet deep with a sharp stake in the

middle of each pit. Nearly a mile long, the line of defensive works was broken at intervals to afford passage to the Russians. In these gaps were barbed wire entanglements and *chevaux de frise*, and behind them were trenches held by riflemen, while in front were mines. At the foot of the hill were other wire entanglements, and on the top of the incline, commanding every yard of approach, ran a deep trench with a shallow trench immediately behind. Along the summit were two lines of trenches, traversed at right angles, and on the ridge beyond were emplacements for guns. A stronger and more difficult position could not be imagined or contrived by military art. It looked impregnable to assault. And, to add to its terrors, the hill and its approaches were commanded by two hills on the East and West—both entrenched and held by strong forces of rifle and artillery. The hill on the West was Shou-shan, the steep mountain of rock between the railway and the road, while that on the East lay beyond the village of Shinluton.

Against this terrible array of pits and wires and hills and trenches, bristling with rifles and guns, and swarming with brave and resolute foes, the Japanese threw themselves with the reckless courage of men who know how to die. How they passed the triple line of pits with the sharp stakes ready to receive their mangled bodies, how they avoided the mines, and how they overcame the barbed wire with its cruel entanglements, I must leave to the imagination. When they came to

the trenches the work was straightforward, though it demanded heroic effort unsurpassed in the history of war. Thrice they rushed almost to the crest, trampling the dead and the dying under their feet; thrice the line of bayonets dripped bloody over trenches piled up with wounds and death. Twice they were driven down the slope wet with gore and strewn with the bodies of comrades who had fallen to rise no more. The enemy fought with the courage of despair, but nothing could withstand another onrush, and before dawn they withdrew to the trenches and redoubts in the plain. Liao-yang was won!

The Russians began to retire at two o'clock on the morning of September 1st, and the Japanese, having occupied the heights, sent a mixed force in pursuit. The main body halted to complete its preparations for carrying the line of fortifications on the plain. Very formidable indeed were these fortifications, which, in strength and design, might almost be described as permanent. Along the front for miles stretched triple lines of pits ten feet deep with sharp stakes in the centre: mines were placed for the unwary foot: the trenches were deep and traversed to give access and exit in every direction: gun emplacements guarded every approach, and at two angles were redoubts masked by moats and pits—massive redoubts against which field guns might batter and infantry perform deeds of heroism in vain. Each redoubt could hold a garrison of one battalion and might be a rallying point in disaster.

But fortifications of this kind have serious disadvantages, especially on a plain and in a defensive scheme that demands as its first condition freedom and rapidity of movement. The enemy must have recognised this weakness, for it was not necessary to carry the redoubts by assault.

The fighting, which begun at ten o'clock on the morning of September 2nd, was confined to the trenches and the railway embankment, which served as a permanent breastwork. From the railway station the Russians opposed the advance with heavy guns, and from the North bank of the river many batteries opened a furious cannonade. Though the enemy held stubbornly to this last line of defence, it was manifest that they were now fighting only a rear guard action to cover the retreat of their army. Their orders were to hold the position at all costs and they obeyed. Before dawn next morning, Captain Inouye, of the Engineers, who blew up the Southern gate at Tientsin in the Boxer expedition, passed through the enemy's lines and reached the Southern gate of the city. His instructions were to destroy the gate, but finding it open he exploded his charge of dynamite near a temple. This was the signal for the final assault.

The main army of General Kuropatkin was already on its way to Mukden. Over the many bridges thrown across the river had passed guns and equipment and stores. What remained was of little consequence and was now committed to the flames. Several huge sheds

stocked with flower and wheat and oats began to blaze and unmistakable proof was given that Liao-yang had been abandoned. But it was still necessary to gain time in order to avoid pursuit. A strong rearguard continued to hold the trenches in front of the city. Against these our infantry advanced early on the 3rd of September. With heavy loss they came to within three hundred yards of the trenches. One or two battalions moved closer, but could make no impression. One method alone promised success and from that the Japanese, with their inherited love of the *arme blanche*, never shrink. The order was to fix bayonets and charge. Up sprang the fighting line with a shout that must have quickened the steps of laggards on the bridges and with a mighty rush the last trench was carried. Again our casualties were many, but the road to Liao-yang was open at last. Rapidly and in good order the Russians retired across the river, destroying the bridges, burning their pontoon train and the woodwork of the railway bridge. Next morning we entered Liao-yang and found to our keen disappointment that it was not a Sedan. Historians who are prophets after the event, will doubtless prove to their own satisfaction that General Kuropatkin's retreat was in conformity with a premeditated plan to entice the Japanese into the heart of Manchuria; that from the first it was his design to avoid a decisive battle at Liao-yang, and that the losses sustained by his army were the natural results of a rearguard action. In this theory they may find support among Japanese Staff

Officers who become suddenly anxious to explain the failure of their Sedan by affirming that as early as the evening of August 30th, they discovered indications of General Kuropatkin's intention to evacuate Liao-yang. To penetrate the designs of the enemy, and to frustrate them is the part of military wisdom, and it is not pleasant to have to acknowledge want of foreknowledge as well as failure in achievement. It is easier to appear wise after the event, and some Japanese Staff Officers succumbed to the allurement. Yet the fact remains indisputable, that until the morning of September 3rd, the Japanese never suspected the Russians of any intention to flee from Liao-yang. Under that conviction they developed their attack on the triple line of redoubts and entrenchments before the town, and made heroic though vain attempts to destroy the enemy's communications with the North.

If Field-Marshal Oyama discovered on August 30th that it was the enemy's purpose to retire on Mukden, to what end did he sacrifice the lives of thousands of men by hurling them in frontal attack against redoubts and trenches upon which his artillery had made no impression? If he believed that General Kuropatkin was already retreating, then with what object did he reduce General Kuroki's army to one-and-a-half divisions, and send him across the river with orders to seize the heights commanding the railway and cut the Russian cummunications? When your enemy has bolted the door and is escaping by the window, surely

it is wasting time and strength to break down the door while you may be at the window. The truth, I fancy, will be found in the fear of the Japanese Commander that the Russians would not merely offer a stubborn resistance, but would attack his own communications with the South. Under the influence of that fear he concentrated nearly the whole of his great force in front of Liao-yang and made a feeble demonstration against the railway. His tactics were foredoomed to failure. As to General Kuropatkin's real purpose, it must be judged not from his defeat and retirement, but from the conditions under which he accepted battle. For several months he had been accumulating supplies and concentrating troops at Liao-yang ; he had guarded the approach to the town with a triple line of trenches, redoubts, pits, entanglements and military obstacles of every kind ; he had many field and heavy guns, and he had chosen for his first line of defence the low hills South of Liao-yang which have been always recognised as an excellent position from which to oppose an advance. These are obvious material considerations which I admit would not weigh one grain in the balance against the security of an army. But their value as evidence of General Kuropatkin's intentions is undeniable when we recall the stubbornness with which they were defended, and above all when we consider the heroic efforts and sacrifices made to destroy the force on his flank North of Liao-yang, and to regain a position that he must have known was of no strategic and of

little tactical importance to the Japanese. History, I think, will confirm the conviction that General Kuropatkin intended to make a decisive stand at Liao-yang, where he hoped to check the invasion and to take the offensive, and that Field-Marshal Oyama's purpose was to surround his enemy and to add capture to defeat. In achievement both fell short of their designs.

Chapter XXX

KUROKI CROSSES THE TAI-TSU.

THE part assigned to General Kuroki in the attack on Liao-yang was worthy of his brilliant record. For five months his army had marched and fought in the mountains, driving back the enemy to his base and suffering not a single reverse. Our position was often hazardous, and since the attack on Mou-tien-ling in July we had confronted a superior force. We had to feed one hundred thousand men—including non-combatants and coolies—and were dependent on a line of communications always difficult, always vulnerable, and, in the rainy season, always precarious. Yet only for a few days at Lien-chen-kwan, when the rivers were in flood, were the soldiers reduced to short rations, and never once were our communications seriously threatened. At no time were we in a position to avoid an engagement had the Russians cared to attack. Retreat in such a country would have meant disaster. General Kuroki staked all on the chance of victory.

I have described in some detail the movements of the First Army from August 25th, when the energies of the Japanese were bent on bringing into united action the armies of the West, the South, and the East, and on completing their strategy by leaving General Kuropatkin no choice but to accept a decisive battle that under conditions that would involve the capture of a large part of his defeated army. Driven back along the railway, the Russian leader showed a disposition to stand at Anshantien where he had a strong and well fortified position. But his ability to hold that position rested on his power to check, if not to repel, the advance of General Kuroki on his left flank. Once the Japanese penetrated the line of defence on the Tang-ho, they could menace the rear of the enemy's position and Anshantien must be evacuated. To protect himself against this danger, General Kuropatkin detached a considerable force to oppose General Kuroki, and was evidently satisfied that he could hold the line of the river Tang while his main body engaged and defeated the inferior force marching on Anshantien. We have seen how this plan was brought to naught by the rapidity and success of General Kuroki's operations after leaving Tien-tshu-tien on August 25th, and how three days later the Russians, outflanked on their left near Am-ping, became uneasy about their base and withdrew to their last defensive line in front of Liao-yang.

On August 29th—the enemy having withdrawn from Anshantien on the previous day—General Kuroki

prepared to cross the Tai-tsu. His orders were to threaten the enemy's flank and to strike at the railway. Such a manœuvre, if successful, must have turned defeat into disaster, and the mere threat of it was likely to disconcert the enemy and arrest any offensive measures he might be contemplating. But in order to gain the point aimed at it was necessary to deceive the Russians and to act with the utmost rapidity : while to ensure the destruction of their direct line of retreat a strong force was imperatively demanded. Every one of these conditions was absent. The enemy knew the hour and the place of our passage over the Tai-tsu : our attack was delayed for two days, and General Kuroki's force was not more than one and a half divisions. The Guards were in difficulties and the Unizawa brigade was watching the flank near Ponchiho, which was threatened by a considerable force of the enemy. There remained only the Twelfth Division and a brigade of the Second Division. The river is broad and deep, and on the North bank are mountain ranges and isolated hills, beyond which lie the plain and the railway to Mukden. Having driven back a small party of observation, the Twelfth Division forded the stream near Kuanton at eleven o'clock on the night of the 30th and proceeded to occupy the hills East of that place. Half the Second division crossed over at the same ford and took up a position to cover their comrades in case of attack. Next day the artillery passed over by a pontoon bridge masked by a rocky escarpment out of range of the

enemy's guns. The crossing was made without difficulty or opposition. General Kuroki was fighting with his back to the river and in front of him was an overwhelming force of the enemy.

This was the position when I crossed the Tai-tsu and came to the General and his Staff on a bold eminence crowned by the walls of a city from which had long vanished every trace of human habitation. We were at Kakuanton, about fifteen miles east of Liao-yang. In front of us, across a broad plain dotted with groves and hamlets and brown with the giant stalks of ripe millet and Indian corn, rose a long low hill with a conical peak in the centre. This was Manjuyama—the scene of a bloody struggle. On the left, divided from Manjuyama by a narrow valley, ran a lofty range of mountains, and far away to the right another range with five peaks, at the Northern extremity of which was the Russian coal mine connected with the city by a railway. These positions were in the hands of the enemy, who had strengthened them with trenches, and had joined Manjuyama with the mountains on our left by a deep trench so that men might move from one position to another unseen. In the plain beyond the Northern spur of Manjuyama were posted two Russian field batteries, and, concealed in a ravine in front of the mountain on our left, was another battery. The range on our right was also trenched, but was not so strongly held as on our front and left, where the enemy's force was four and a half divisions.

The capture of Manjuyama must be the first step in our advance and the attempt was made at once. Three batteries of field guns opened a cannonade from our front and soon came under the enemy's fire from the plain beyond. The range of the Russian guns was fairly accurate, and to an observer at a distance must have appeared to do great damage. But from our position we could see that the direction was invariably wrong, and never changed even by accident. Hundreds upon hundreds of shrapnel burst to the right of the Japanese batteries and made the air hum with the hail of their bullets, yet at the end of the day only one man was killed and seven were wounded. Our guns gave no heed to the enemy's artillery, but turned their energies to Kuropatkin's Eye, where the Russians showed themselves boldly on the skyline. Again and again the slope was swept with shrapnel and common shell that drove the men from the trenches and sent them hot-footed to the shelter of the crest. Reinforcements came from the mountain on our left, moving unseen along the trench to Manjuyama and appearing on the slope and summit in long dark lines. They had to pass through an inferno. Every foot of the hill was flecked with tiny white clouds of shrapnel, and threw up showers of black earth from common shell charged with a terrible explosive. It seemed madness to face such a fire, yet the Russians came and went and moved along the summit and disappeared behind the conical peak as though proof against shot and shell. Meanwhile, our infantry

were making ready for a desperate enterprise. We saw them moving forward in front of the guns—line after line, in close formation.

Now they blackened some green field and looked a target that none could miss. But the country was broken and the corn was uncut, and though the enemy's guns searched for them again and again they passed unscathed. Now the giant millet hid them, and they vanished as if the earth had opened under their feet. Again they came into view above the green bean stalks, they halted as if uncertain of their direction—for you can soon be lost in the corn—came back and plunged once more into the millet. Their objective was the North slope of Manjuyama, to the right of a village almost in the shadow of Kuropatkin's Eye.

So the hours dragged on, our guns covering the advance until rifle shots were heard, and the movements of the enemy, like ants disturbed, showed that our infantry was engaged at close quarters, and the fight for Manjuyama had begun in earnest. Wildly and with frantic haste the Russian guns in the ravine searched the fields in front of us, and a battery on our right joining the fray, tore up the crest of Manjuyama with deadly explosions.

The sun sank blood-red below the horizon, and the Western sky was flooded with a crimson glow. The guns were silent, and we heard only the rifles like the crackling of thorns in the fire. Suddenly, and with one accord, every battery opened, and out of the darkness

leapt tongues of flame. Hill and plain shook with thunder, and the air was filled with the roar and shriek and snarl of shells. It was a splendid, yet a dread spectacle. All night Russian and Japanese fought for possession of that hill, charging and counter-charging until the ground was sodden with blood and the trenches were filled with dead.

At two o'clock next morning the enemy fell back under cover of their artillery and Manjuyama was ours. Meanwhile, reinforcements were hurrying out of Liao-yang, and a strong column marched against the division on our right. With sixty guns the Russians defended the five-peaked range near the coal mine, and our position looked critical. But help was coming —another brigade was marching to the rescue—and the fight went on with renewed confidence. The Unizawa brigade had been ordered to seize Ponchiho and to join the main body without delay. It was imperative that we should secure this range of hills, and on September 2nd General Kuroki endeavoured to take it with one-and-a-half battalions. From three positions the enemy shelled our advance, and in front were three Russian battalions. Under a devastating fire from flank and front the Japanese infantry fought heroically, but without avail, and were finally compelled to withdraw. Then, indeed, we began to feel the need for an army, and in the words of a brave General, the meal of rice "tasted bitter in the mouth." We still held Manjuyama —won at terrible sacrifice—though stormed at by shot

and shell from every side. Night and day the Japanese infantry endured this ordeal on a few handsful of uncooked rice, and at night were called upon to repel two terrific assaults.

Fully appreciating the danger that threatened his retiring flank, General Kuropatkin had given orders that Manjuyama must be retaken at all costs. Covered by darkness, six regiments hurled themselves upon the position held by four Japanese regiments. It was a combat of heroes. Charge and counter-charge were delivered with fury on summit and slope and among the corn below. So close were the combatants that they intermingled and the utmost confusion prevailed. Leading a regiment from the brigade that had crossed the river by a forced march, the General found it impossible to distinguish friend from foe until the bugle had sounded "Cease fire," and the flash of the enemy's rifles in the darkness revealed the point of greatest danger. Placing himself at the head of two companies, the brigadier charged across this zone of fire; and the fight went on through the night with unabated fury. While the fate of Manjuyama still trembled in the balance, an assault was made against the mountain on our left, and one battalion succeeded in gaining a foothold. But their ammunition gave out, and only a few stragglers returned to tell the story of how they captured the enemy's guns, and had to flee just when victory was within their grasp.

Chapter XXXI

RETREAT OF THE RUSSIANS.

EXHAUSTED by long hours of continuous combat upon a few handfuls of dry rice, the Japanese were unable to make any progress. To add to their troubles the field wire failed and General Kuroki was ignorant of the movements of the armies in front of Liao-yang. All he could hope was that the last report was an accomplished fact, and that they had advanced as far as the river. But so far from showing signs of retreating, the enemy, under General Kuropatkin himself, continued to receive reinforcements, and pressed hard upon the Twelfth Division. Throughout the 2nd of September, General Kuroki's divisions were merely a target for the Russian guns. No advance was possible until the Guards on his left could make good their position. As this appeared remote, the commander ordered them to leave three batteries with a small force to occupy the Russians, while the greater part of the division joined the main body at Kokanton. Meanwhile the fight went on with unabated fury.

At three o'clock on the morning of the 3rd, the last desperate assault of the Russians was repelled and Manjuyama was silent. Upon the reverse slope within a few yards from the summit lay a triple line of Russian dead. They lay as they had fallen—like brave men with their faces to the foe—in almost perfect alignment as if stricken down by one blow. Already the air was tainted with corruption and the Chinese were robbing the dead. An awful sight was that hill, littered with blood-sprinkled equipment, broken bayonets and shattered rifles. Dark stains showed where many had fallen, and out of the reeking earth that strove to hide them many a blackened hand was raised in mute appeal to Heaven. Talk of the glory of a soldier's grave! The poet who sings of it cannot imagine its horrors. Though driven from the hill the enemy held stubbornly to a position three thousand yards South, and a great force was concentrated at Yentai on the railway, and at another point to the North. Anxious to push on and to turn the Russian retreat into a rout, General Kuroki found it impossible to advance. He had now two divisions, and another brigade was hurrying to his support. But his men were exhausted by many days of hard fighting. Two army corps confronted him, and all he could reasonably hope and expect to do was to hold his ground in the event of attack. Moreover, he knew nothing of the situation South of Liao-yang, for his communication by wire was still interrupted. Had he been informed of the success of the assault on

the trenches before the city he might have taken the risk and pushed on toward the railway. In the circumstances, his hesitation was natural and perhaps prudent, for it is open to doubt whether he could have succeeded, and failure would have meant disaster.

On the 4th of September, having been reinforced by one brigade and having command of two and a half divisions, General Kuroki decided to advance. A dense fog screened our front and compelled us to proceed with caution. But little or no resistance was encountered. The five-peaked range was in our possession: the enemy had been expelled from the colliery, and it was apparent that the Russians on our front had retired. A mixed brigade marching from the coal mine discovered a strong force in the hills four miles North and drove it out. Two and a half miles to the South-west of the colliery another body of Russians was encountered and engaged us in a confused sort of way until six o'clock on the morning of the 5th, while five miles North-west of the mine another skirmish lasted until morning.

At one o'clock on the morning of the 5th we occupied Sautowha, on the main road ten miles north of Liao-yang, and in the afternoon shelled the retreating columns of the enemy along the railway. Our losses were heavy. From August 24th to September 5th the division operating on our left flank had 2,082 casualties: 21 officers killed, 61 officers wounded, 2,000 non-commissioned officers and men killed and wounded; the central division had 2,024 casualties: 25 officers

killed, 58 officers wounded, 1 officer missing, 1,940 non-commissioned officers and men killed and wounded; the division on our right lost 1,540: 16 officers killed, 36 wounded, 1,421 non-commissioned officers and men killed and wounded, and 67 missing. The reserves had 490 casualties, making a total of 6,136 casualties, including 234 officers and 5,902 men. The proportion of killed to wounded was about five to one. The army on our left in front of Liao-yang had 6,853 casualties, including 1,328 killed, of whom 56 were officers. The army on the extreme left lost nearly 10,000.

Even this heroic struggle against overwhelming odds failed to turn the Russian retreat into a rout. To effect the retirement of a defeated army of two hundred thousand men without leaving captives and spoil in the hands of the enemy requires time as well as adroitness. In the opinion of men best qualified to judge, General Kuropatkin had ample time in these three days. The resources at his command were great; the country was in his favour, and his communications were never in serious danger. He had many bridges across the river; many trains were waiting on the railway to carry stores and equipment; his horses and wagons were practically unlimited. The country over which he had to retreat is a broad open plain without a single defile or range of hills that the enemy might seize. Once over the river—and there was none to oppose his crossing—General Kuropatkin's army could move along a front of three or four miles without risk or interference, and fifteen

miles North of Liao-yang he was beyond any danger of effective pursuit. General Kuropatkin received all the credit due to so successful a retreat, but it is well to point out that the conditions were altogether on his side, and that in five months his troops had had abundant experience to perfect themselves in these essential manœuvres.

Chapter XXXII

BATTLE OF THE SHA-HO.

THE RUSSIAN ATTACK.

On October 8th General Kuropatkin issued an address to the army in Mukden giving reason for the retreat from Liao-yang, and announcing that the time had come to roll back the advancing tide of Japanese and restore the fortunes of Russia. Hitherto the enemy had been able to keep the initiative by reason of their numbers. But the Czar had at last given him a force great enough to abandon the defensive and to ensure victory. Papers found on the body of a Staff Officer were more precise. The orders from St. Petersburg were to take the offensive as soon as possible, to march to the relief of Port Arthur, and on no account to retire from Mukden. The army that was to attempt this herculean labour consisted of sixteen divisions of infantry, and one division of cavalry, the strength of which may be put at two hundred thousand rifles and four thousand sabres.

One month had passed since General Kuropatkin retreated from Liao-yang and, fearing pursuit, withdrew his defeated and demoralised troops to the North. Finding that the Japanese were not pressing close upon his heels, the Russian leader took measures for defence. Tieh-ling, forty-five miles North of Mukden, was chosen as a base, and the hills on both sides of the road were fortified. Wushun, thirty miles East, on the upper reaches of the river Hun, was garrisoned by a large force to guard against a flanking movement and connected with Tieh-ling by a new road. The mountain pass that had served as the means of communication with Wushun was strengthened with earthworks. Near Tahaitun, seven miles South of Tieh-ling, the range of hills that cross the road from East to West were entrenched; the right bank of the river at Ilu, twenty-two miles South, was fortified; defences were made in front of Mukden, and trenches were dug on the North bank of the river Hun. At the end of September General Kuropatkin had completed his preparations, and in the first days of October the army began to move South. Small parties of Cossacks and infantry appeared on our front, which extended from Pintaitsu, North of Ponchiho, to the railway at Yentai—a distance of about thirty miles from East to West. Their mission was to ascertain our strength and disposition. On October the 4th Japanese patrols on the Mukden and Wushun roads were attacked, and two days later the brigade on our right wing was ordered to fall back on the river Taitsu

at Ponchiho. The enemy on that day established themselves along a line stretching from Pintaitsu through Sankwaisu to the North of Yentai.

The advance of the Russian army had begun in earnest, and we were to witness a struggle that has few parallels in the annals of war. For one long week half a million of men held one another in close and deadly grip, and night and day before our eyes were performed deeds of heroism that have never been surpassed. Attack and counter-attack followed with bewildering rapidity; position after position was stormed and stormed again; now a brigade and now a company pressed forward with the bayonet, and on the hill tops, clear against the sky, men faced each other within a dozen paces or rushed together in one bloody scrimmage. The Russians fought with the courage and fatalism of their race. Never have they displayed such reckless bravery and resolution. But they have lost their aptitude for war. Within twenty-four hours they had ceased to be the assailants and were fighting for their lives against the irresistible tide that swept toward Mukden and covered mountain and plain for thirty miles with dead and dying.

The plan of attack was simple and resembled that of the Japanese on the Yalu. General Mistchenko was to turn our right flank in the mountains near Ponchiho, and crossing the Tai-tsu to threaten us in the rear at Liao-yang. A strong force was to engage our centre East of the coal mine at Yentai, while our left flank on

the railway was to be held and prevented from giving help. Against our right wing, from Ponchiho to the coal mine, were hurled nine divisions of infantry with one division of cavalry and a detachment of mounted infantry under General Renenkampf; four divisions confronted our centre and left flank and three divisions were in reserve. The assault was made with energy and determination on our extreme right, and until the morning of the 14th the force defending that flank was in serious danger, General Mistchenko having succeeded in isolating it from the main body and crossed the Tai-tsu with a brigade of infantry and a regiment of cavalry. The failure of General Kuropatkin's plan may be ascribed to the obstinate courage of the brigade on our extreme right, who fought for days against overwhelming numbers, and to the fact that, as on the Tang-ho before Liao-yang, General Kuroki drove a wedge into the heart of the enemy's front.

At noon on October the 9th I left Tong-kin-ryo, the Tomb of the Eastern Capital, a village four miles East of Liao-yang where ancestors of the Emperor of China sleep in the shadow of pine trees and marble tablets recording their virtues. The tide of war had swept over the hamlet, leaving it silent and deserted. From the Temple of Buddha, which had been my solitary abode since the Japanese entered Liao-yang, I heard the sound of rifles in the hills two miles away and learned that mounted bandits or Hunghutse had encountered the Chinese troops and were being driven into the

mountains whence they had emerged on the departure of the Japanese.

At Taiho, a squalid collection of houses South of the coal mine, where I arrived in the afternoon, were evidences of the battle. That morning the brigade on our right had been attacked from three sides by a great force, and a brigade of the enemy's infantry with a division of cavalry and two guns, had crossed the Tai-tsu and was threatening Ponchiho from the South. Our right wing was practically surrounded, and a division was ordered East to reinforce the garrison. At the same time the enemy appeared on our front. They occupied Shaliuho, a hamlet North-east of the coal mine, and Pachiatsu, further to the East, and strengthened their force at Ponchiho.

Next day the struggle on our extreme right grew more severe and the position of the brigade became very serious. The division sent to its aid had not reached its destination when the Russians made a determined assault from all sides. Prince Kun-in led his cavalry brigade East and crossed the Tai-tsu in pursuit of the enemy, who had gained the South bank of the river, but before effective help could be given Ponchiho might fall and the Japanese army be compelled to retire to a defensive position before Liao-yang.

Our situation on the 10th looked extremely critical and called for decisive measures. Field Marshal Oyama showed himself equal to the gravity of the occasion. He determined to rob the enemy of the

A Buddhist Shrine.

Figure of Buddha.

[facing p. 268

initiative by delivering an attack upon their centre. Once more the brunt of the battle had to be borne by General Kuroki's army. From the uniforms of dead and wounded soldiers, from papers found upon officers, and from statements made by prisoners, we learned that in the Russian fighting line were thirteen divisions :— 1st, 3rd, 5th, 6th and 9th Sharpshooters ; 1st, 2nd and 3rd Siberian ; 22nd, 35th and 71st Line ; one division of cavalry and a detachment of mounted infantry. In reserve were three divisions :—The 9th and 31st of the Tenth Army Corps, and the 54th of the Fifth Army Corps. Nine divisions of infantry and one cavalry division confronted General Kuroki from the coal mine to Ponchiho.

The scene of these operations lies to the South of the Sha or Sandy River and East of the railway. Though within twenty-two miles from Mukden, the country may be described as mountainous. Ranges of hills run in broken lines from West to East with a tendency to the South as they approach the rising sun. The hills are bare of vegetation and have many spurs shaped like the spine of some monstrous saurian—a semblance that doubtless gave birth to the Chinese superstition that certain hills are the backs of dragons and may not be disturbed with impunity. The ranges are divided by cultivated valleys dotted with villages and farmsteads, and seamed in many places with ravines and nullahs that give excellent cover. From the plain West and for five miles East of the railway, rise isolated and rocky hills

that command a wide field of fire and make good infantry positions, while toward Ponchiho the ranges draw closer together and are loftier and more precipitous.

On the morning of the 10th, the two armies lay among the hills South of the Sha-ho, our left wing resting on the railway and our right in the mountains near Ponchiho. Both armies were entrenched and on our front were few signs of activity. Our batteries were masked at the foot of the hills near the coal mine and in the Eastern heights across the plain, while our infantry was concealed in trenches on the level ground and on the slopes. Early in the day the enemy's guns displayed great energy, their fire being directed against the ridges and villages that might shelter riflemen. The key to the Russian position was a hill about six thousand yards from the coal mine—a broad shouldered height crowned by a rocky escarpment that looked like a fort.

Bastion Hill, as we named it, is flanked on the East by a range traversed by spurs on which the Japanese artillery and infantry had established themselves. Fronting it on the South rose a mount connected with the Eastern range by a saddle. Behind this lower eminence is a ravine and a dense grove. The Western slope of Bastion Hill descends into a plain through which flows a shallow stream almost washing the walls of a village hidden among trees to the North-west. The approach from the South is over the flat commanded from a deep

gully running like a trench under the hill. On the North stretches another plain with a range of mountains beyond, where the enemy's guns were posted.

The scene might have tempted an artist and would have taxed his palette. Before us lay the valley shaded with russet and amber. The sun caught the sheaves of harvested millet and transmuted them into gold, and from beds of dappled brown rose groves of willow and fir whose green branches threw dark shadows over the homesteads. And beyond towered mountain and hill which Autumn had tinted with purple and amber. It was a scene of pastoral beauty into which the spirit of war had entered unbidden. The husbandmen were leaving their houses among the trees and hastening through the stubble, but not to garner their sheaves which stood ripe in the sunshine. They were fleeing with wife and child like Lot from the city of Gomorrah, "and the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace" as gun answered gun.

After noon there appeared on the plain to the West of the Bastion Hill a large force of the enemy. Their serried lines made a dark mass against the russet fields on the right of our batteries, from which leapt yellow tongues of flame that seemed to lick the lowest slope. In front of this mass, near a cluster of trees, rode two squadrons of cavalry, who appeared to have made up their minds to show us that Cossacks have some use in war. Knee to knee they came onward and we held our breath. At the trees they drew rein, broke line,

reformed and rode back. Presently they returned and treated us to the same performance. It was a pretty spectacle, but the meaning of it was beyond our comprehension. The dark lines or infantry behind also began to move. For a moment we imagined that they were about to advance across the valley, but they wheeled to the right, and, marching and counter-marching, went back to their original position near the guns. On our left, within range of our artillery, several companies were digging trenches on the side of a low hill. They were at no pains to conceal themselves or their work, and our guns left them unmolested.

Whatever the night might bring forth, it was soon clear that the Russians had no intention of renewing the attack on our centre, and we concluded that their immediate purpose was to demonstrate to a watchful foe that they were present in force. Soldiers who go into battle with brass bands are capable of extraordinary things.

Chapter XXXIII

A GALLANT FIGHT.

THE weak point in the Japanese line of defence was on the right near Ponchiho, twenty miles East of General Kuroki's main position at Yentai. To this flank General Umizawa had returned after the battle of Liao-yang in order to keep watch on the enemy's movements. The greater part of his brigade was ten miles north of Ponchiho—an important depot—but was withdrawn as soon as it became evident that the Russians were advancing in force. The retirement began at noon on October 7th, when stringent measures were taken to prevent the Chinese from communicating with the enemy. Stores enough to feed the brigade for three days and one hundred thousand rounds of ammunition were removed during the night, and the last straggler reached Karensei at six o'clock next morning before the Russians discovered that the position had been abandoned.

The enemy did not lose much time. At ten o'clock on the 8th, infantry, cavalry and artillery

appeared in front of Ponchiho, and it was manifest that General Umizawa's small force was about to engage in a desperate struggle, upon the success of which depended the security of the whole Japanese army. On the following day the garrison found itself threatened in front and on a flank. Its position was extremely hazardous and the peril increased hourly. A battalion of infantry, a regiment of cavalry, and three field pieces had crossed the Tai-tsu with the intention of taking Ponchiho in the rear. Had the Japanese been able to command even a mountain battery they might have prevented the passage of the river, which was effected with provoking coolness under their very noses. General Umizawa at Tumentiutzu was appealed to for help, but was so hard pressed that he could spare only two companies of infantry and two field guns. The enemy on the other hand continued to receive large reinforcements and pressed the attack with fury. After a short artillery preparation they made a fierce assault on the position. Working their way up a steep and rugged mountain, three hundred Russians charged the trenches. Only fifteen lived to carry back the tale of heroism, which brought fresh troops to the venture. Overwhelmed, the Japanese had to abandon the heights. The hills on the road between Ponchiho and Tumentogling also were captured after a Titanic struggle. The field wire was cut and communication with the rest of the army was impossible. Couriers were dispatched with messages for instant aid. Most of them fell by

the way, but one or two succeeded in carrying the news to Head-Quarters and returned with the command: "You must hold the position to the last man." A Japanese soldier hardly needs to be told that. Like the Old Guard he dies—never surrenders.

But help was at hand. General Kuroki and his staff were keenly alive to the critical state of the right flank. As General Fujii graphically remarked: "My food tasted bitter in my mouth," for he realised that unless aid was given without delay the whole army must fall back upon Liao-yang. Though he could ill spare a man from any part of the line, General Kuroki ordered the Twelfth Division to march to the relief of Ponchiho.

The advance guard under General Shimamura came upon the scene late in the afternoon and was received with frantic shouts of "Banzai" as they rushed forward to the aid of their sorely pressed comrades. But this accession by no means restored the balance, for the enemy received fresh reinforcements and showed the greatest valour and determination. Many and desperate were the encounters by day and by night. Rocky Hill, to the North-west of Ponchiho, which commanded the neighbouring heights, was assailed again and again and was finally retaken by the Japanese. A company of infantry, sleeping near the foot of the hill, was roused by its commander who had climbed the height and found the Russians in possession.

Seizing the regimental colour the officer placed himself at the head of the company. So swift and desperate was

the counter attack that the enemy was swept headlong down the slope and threw into confusion the advance line of a battalion coming to the rescue. Before the Russians recover themselves the Japanese were pouring volleys into their ranks. The victory was complete and no attempt was made to recapture the position.

On the same night the enemy approached a narrow defile, and finding no Japanese marched boldly into the Pass. Both sides of the defile however where held by men who watched the advent of the Russians and waited silently until they had entered. Crowded together in this narrow space the enemy suffered severely. Throughout the day both sides fought with indomitable courage and energy, attack and counter-attack following in swift succession. The advantage however was with the enemy, who threw upon our flank ever increasing numbers and brought to bear on our position no fewer than eighty guns—among them howitzers, against which mountain guns were as children's toys. „ Our losses were heavy, and it was with profound relief that we heard that the division sent to aid Ponchiho was in sight. The arrival of reinforcements gave new energy to the gallant brigade that had so long withstood this desperate onslaught, but produced no immediate change in the situation. The force in front was still overwhelming, and had by no means abandoned the hope of conquest. Attack was therefore impossible, and for a time, at any rate, the Japanese were content to maintain their position.

The 9th of October was one of the most critical days of the war. The Japanese losses near Ponchiho had been great; important positions had been abandoned; ammunition was running short; the men were without food, and communication with the rest of the army was difficult and precarious.

Field Marshal Oyama recognised that the situation demanded desperate measures. Though anxious to await the fall of Port Arthur before taking the offensive, he felt that his hand had been forced. Orders were, therefore, given for a general attack. When I left the field on the night of the 10th it was manifest that passive resistance was at an end, and that darkness would bring important developments. During the night an attack was made by the Guards Division against the heights in front of Bastion Hill. The enemy had adopted several ingenious devices to guard against surprises. In some places they had stretched wires and chains charged with electricity of high potentiality. Their latest artifice was a string of camel bells, against which an unwary enemy stumbling announces his approach, and is welcomed with a volley.

Despite this warning and the use of hand grenades the attack was so far successful that at daybreak we had strengthened our hold on the hills North of Yentai, though the Russians continued to occupy Bastion Hill and the spurs in front.

With dawn the battle began. A mist hung over the plain and clung to the skirts of the hills, making it

impossible to see what progress was on our front. Out of the white vapours came the rattle of rifles and the roar of artillery resounding through the valley like a tornado. The Pride of the Morning scattered, and the sun lit up the scene with a gentle radiance. Before us lay the broad valley with its sheaves of giant millet among the brown furrows and yellow stubble. The villages were deserted save for a few of their blue-gowned habitants who stood in terrified groups behind the outer walls. Chentow, a large village nearest the hills, was under fire from two batteries at the foot of Bastion Hill. Behind the walls lay our riflemen listening to the angry snarl of the shrapnel as it burst overhead, and laughing as they felt the solid stone masonry throb and sputter under the leaden hail. Our batteries had moved from under the hills near the coal mine. One stood in the open South-west of Chentow masked by millet, striving to silence Bastion Hill and drawing upon itself the concentrated fire of sixteen guns.

I have called attention to the grave disability under which the Japanese labour by reason of the inferior range and weight of their artillery. Never was the disadvantage more painfully demonstrated than on this day, when the infantry were in need of their support, and when the chances of a whole lifetime escaped under their very muzzles. The ground about the battery was covered with shrapnel as the tiny white clouds burst in the sky, the bases of shells throwing up brown clouds of earth, and the bullets rippling over the loose

friable loam like heavy rain drops. Very terrible it looked, yet no damage was done. The men took refuge in deep pits, out of which they came occasionally to serve the guns, or to bring ammunition from the wagons. The practice of taking shelter when a battery is under fire is one that commends itself at first sight, but reflection and observation shew that it may become a vicious and a dangerous habit, and may seriously affect the usefulness of artillery in action. In every other respect the Japanese guns are skilfully handled. Happily, the Russian gunners are not without defects. Their shrapnel bursts high, and the French system of *Rafale*—that is giving each gun in a battery a slightly different range—is not a success in their hands. For several hours the unequal artillery duel went on. Occasionally the batteries at Bastion Hill would seek a new objective, and the tree tops about the villages would be flecked with white clouds. From the mountains beyond Bastion Hill to the East the enemy's guns kept up a desultory cannonade against the hills on our front, and from one of our batteries on the plain to the West came spasmodic replies.

At noon there was no apparent change. Our infantry remained in the same positions; some like locusts in the hollows; others behind the walls of Chentow; still more in the brown seams of the heights beyond the valley. Suddenly all eyes turned to the flowing contour of the ridge in front of Bastion Hill. The advance had begnn. With heads bent, as in a

hurricane, a company of Japanese were racing up a hill, on which were two trenches. Taking them in reverse, they charged the Russians, and shot them down before they seemed aware of the approach. The fight was short and sharp and bloody. Then they vanished. Presently I saw them again coming over the brow of the hill. They descended the slope to the saddle and threw themselves into a deep gully on the flank of another eminence. Here they lay to recover breath, and prepare for another charge. Out they came in a few minutes; at first a dozen, then six, then in twos and threes. Never were soldiers fleeter of foot than these brave Japanese, and never did men stand in greater need of speed and daring. Scattering, they ran, some to the right, others to the left—all making for the summit. Bullets swept over and around and among them. I could see the tiny spurts of yellow earth that rose in their path as the zip, zip, zip of lead lashed the air with invisible whips. One fell, and another and another. Would they ever gain the crest? We held our breath. Now they have returned to the left, and are lying down hugging the ground while the leaden storm sweeps over them. They are up again, and moving forward more slowly in extended irregular line. Half a dozen men are in front. They reach the summit. Then out of the earth spring grey forms to meet them. Rifles flash and the dark blue uniforms vanish. The noble six have fallen. But their comrades are advancing. Another second, and they appear on the crest. Again the grey figures rise—

a steady resolute line tipped with steel. Back fall the Japanese. Even in that terrible moment they obey the voice of their officer, who stands before them with drawn sword. They have formed line. Their bayonets flash in the sunlight. Twenty paces divide the lines of grey and blue. In the twinkling of an eye they meet. One mad rush, and they are welded together in a grip that nothing save death can loosen. For a moment I see the thrusting of cold steel and the scorching flash of rifle. Then the grey line breaks into fragments and rolls out of sight. The dark blue uniforms draw closer together. Their ranks are thinned, yet they never look back. Again they move forward, and from a second trench springs another line of grey.

They are brave men these Russians, and face death unflinching. Another rush—another wild scrimmage of steel and lead and human forms, and all that is left of the grey line tumbles like a wave over the hill. The slope is strewn with dead. Even now there is no pause in the Japanese advance. Closing their broken ranks they run to the crest of the hill, and standing boldly on the sky-line raise their rifles to the shoulder. Not until I passed over this dreadful hill could I realise what was happening in the ravine beyond. Here were trenches and gullies out of which the enemy were fleeing into the wood and along the valley hidden by low hills. The dead lay everywhere—in the trenches, in the gullies, in the valley and in the wood—shot down by the riffes on the hill. Few escaped that terrible battue. A score

of fugitives we saw running for life out of this valley of the shadow of death. They had thrown aside great coat and rifle. Now and then a man would fall forward and rise no more ; here and there a man would stumble and rise to limp along painfully. The hurricane of lead followed close on their tracks.

West of this ravine out of which the enemy ran in ones and twos and threes the two Russian batteries were still at their ineffectual work, and a large force of cavalry and infantry were massed. The front of the plain near Bastion Hill was black with them. After a time they moved. Column after column passed behind a grove of firs into a village at the foot of the Northern heights. Had the retreat begun ? Outside the village they halted and faced to the front. Were they about to deliver a counter attack ? We looked again and saw a column return and march away into the mountains. From the East along the plain beyond came more Russians—infantry and cavalry and guns. They, too, crossed the stream and made slowly for the hills. Two batteries with an escort of Cossacks and infantry came from the village and moved Eastward as if to meet some unseen danger where guns had been booming solemnly all day. There was much marching and counter-marching that brought to the lips of the observer the military adage : " Order, counter-order, disorder." Doubtless all these perplexing movements of the enemy had their meaning. To us they admitted of one interpretation. The Russian attack had failed all along the line and the retreat had begun.

Chapter XXXIV

A HARD-WON VICTORY.

Now was the moment to strike and to strike hard. Out of the South came a double line of men. They stretched Westward across the brown sunlit plain—a far-flung battle line. War is full to the lips with horrors, yet it has its crown of glory. And this is the crown—a line of battle advancing to the attack. The blood raced hot and fast through our veins as we watched them moving over the plain. Two paces between each man; forty paces between the lines; khaki tunics and dark blue trousers; rifle in hand. Onward they marched in long steady unbroken lines. No parade was ever finer. The brown furrows and yellow stubble were crushed flat under their feet. In their path lay a deserted hamlet, over whose grey walls hung the shadows of fir trees. Near the village they halted, and knelt with rifle at the shoulder—ready for attack. The supports came up at the double. Then the lines rose and passed into the village.

A moment or two and they reappeared in the fields beyond, where sheaves of millet caught the glow of the setting sun. On the right rose a solitary grey rock crowned by a temple, whose hoary towers and crennelated walls seemed to have been hewn out of the mountain. In the shadow of a sheer cliff lay a cluster of peasant cottages, and on the Western incline was a dark grove. This was their objective, for here in trenches and among the escarpments was a rearguard of Russians ready to shed their blood for the safety of the army. Away to the left stood another grey rock, shaped like the segment of a basin upturned, and isolated on the plain. One side fell sheer into a deep bed, through which flowed a shallow stream. On the near bank behind a little grove and a few houses were posted two Japanese batteries, the escort of which covered the Western slope of the rock. The lines were advancing upon Temple Hill when the enemy's guns found them. From Bastion Hill and from the heights to the North came the roar of artillery, and over the unswerving lines burst clouds of shrapnel. The effect was hardly perceptible, and not for a second did the guns check the advance. Swinging toward the East the lines moved steadily forward. On our front appeared another line advancing from the South-west, so that Temple Hill lay within a triangle of rifles. Shrapnel continued to rain upon the open ranks, but the forward movement went on, the lines converging upon the Temple until they faced opposing rifles. North of Temple Hill runs a

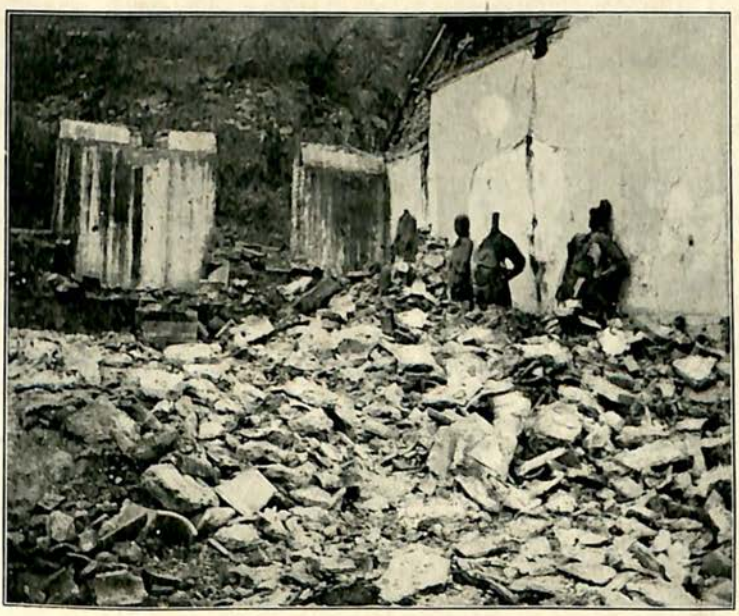
road on which the Russian infantry were preparing to withstand the onset. Their rifles were already making gaps in the rapidly advancing ranks, but the progress was unchecked.

Shouting their battle cry the Japanese rushed upon the line of bayonets fringing the road. It was thrust and thrust, and in a few moments all was over. The scattered remnant of the enemy was in full flight along the road to the North. Half a company posted in a field to the left rear of the Japanese remained until the last. Few escaped. While we watched this hand-to-hand contest the troops on the Eastern side of Temple Hill were hotly engaged. From the houses at the foot of the cliff rifles rang out, and from the heights on the North flew shell after shell. The advance over this front was difficult, for Temple Hill was strongly held and the Russians fought with the courage of despair. Flight was not less perilous than combat, and upon their efforts depended the safety of the retreating army.

While the attack was being pressed from the West a large force of the enemy came down from the hills and drew near to the Temple. They appeared to be contemplating a counter attack. But with the Russians nothing happens as you expect. Well out of rifle range they halted, faced about and retired, leaving two companies on the rising ground to check the advance on our right front. Two new batteries in the hills to the North opened fire and the air swirled with the angry snarl of shrapnel. From the trenches and walls of

Temple Hill the devoted rear guard emptied their magazines and strove like heroes to stem the torrent that swept toward them. They might as well have tried to withstand the long roll of the Pacific. The wave rushed on and engulphed them. When I reached the hill it was a sorry sight. The walls of the Temple were riddled with shot: the painted mud gods through whose breasts the Russian soldiers had thrust their bayonets a few days before looked placidly down upon the broken and bleeding bodies of the scoffers. One shrine had caught fire and amid the charred ruins stood the gods shorn of paint and ornament—pathetic idols of mud in all their nakedness. Upon the slope, under the trees, lay rigid forms holding fast to rifles, and on the road below men seemed asleep.

Temple Hill was ours, but Bastion Hill was still in Russian hands, and further advance on our front was impracticable. The enemy's troops massed at the foot of the hill had greatly diminished in number, column after column having marched North into the mountains. The two batteries, however, maintained their activity, searching the empty fields, bombarding the villages, and finally turning their attention to the guns near the rocky height on our left. Their shells did little or no damage, though they kept our batteries silent. Only towards sunset, when the Russians appeared to be making preparations to withdraw their guns, was there any display of energy on the part of the Japanese artillery. Shrapnel being fused at too short a range,



Temple Hill: Ruins of Temple and Gods.

A Manchurian Scavenger.

[*facing p.* 286

common shell was used, and clouds of earth and smoke rose about the enemy's batteries, but not for a moment were they silenced or their position endangered.

Meantime Bastion Hill began to give signs of life. Hitherto it had been only a prominent feature in the landscape, though its tactical importance could not escape recognition. At five o'clock dark figures suddenly appeared on the sky line along the Northern slope. They grew rapidly in multitude and began to descend. Pouring over the edge of the height, they spread like a flood on the Southern slope. What a target for guns! How the Japanese artillery-men must have fretted and fumed to miss such an opportunity. Along the foot of Bastion Hill stretches a deep gully into which the Russian infantrymen dropped. Presently a few emerged and ran forward into another nullah within easy range of a bluff held by the remnant of the gallant company that had stormed the lower height and wrought such havoc earlier in the day. Again we looked for an attack by the enemy and again we were disappointed. At Ponchiho, on our extreme right, the struggle had continued all day with increasing fury. The Russians had pushed forward reinforcements and four divisions with eighty guns were engaged. Our comparatively small force suffered heavy losses, but succeeded in holding back the enemy who made no further progress on that flank. At night when hostilities were suspended our position was this :—Our left flank had moved some miles along the West of the railway ; our centre

threatened the Russian line of retreat from the East; the pursuit of the left wing of the Eastern army was checked by a crossfire from hills North of the Temple, and from the foot of Bastion Hill, while at Ponchiho, on our extreme right, the position was still critical. There were unmistakable evidences, however, that the attack on the Russian centre had shaken the confidence of the enemy, and that they were already making preparations to retreat behind the Sha river.

Ponchiho continued to be a source of the greatest anxiety. Though the brigade which formed the original garrison had heen reinforced, the enemy showed no disposition to relax their hold. On the 11th they renewed the attack with great energy, and on the following day made a supreme effort to capture the range of hills North of Ponchiho. This position was held by a single company of reserves of the Guards. At four o'clock in the morning, a large force of Russians attacked the hill from three points. As they approached the Japanese sprang out of the first trench and charged with the bayonet. But what were fourteen men against so many? The first line of trenches was quickly in the enemy's possession, and the remnant of the Japanese company formed up on the crest of the hill. In the darkness took place a terrible scrimmage. Friend was indistinguishable from foe. Despite heroic efforts the Japanese were driven back and the heights appeared to be lost when another company came to the rescue. The officer who led these reinforcements came to the crest of

the hill shouting, "Slay! Slay!" and fell instantly with a bullet through the heart. Colonel Ota and his adjutant were wounded and the colour bearer fell. Lieutenant Kiritani seized the flag and the gallant remnant of the company fought till dawn. On the first streak of grey in the East, the Japanese guns opened on the position and the Russians retired, leaving on the hill eight officers and one hundred and forty men dead.

To add to the difficulties a new and unknown force came up from the South on the morning of the 12th and Ponchiho was surrounded. But when things looked most serious an unexpected change happened. The enemy who had crossed the Tai-tsu began to return and the pressure from the South was relieved. It was clear that the Russian infantry brigade and cavalry regiment had met with some disaster and that the attempt to strike from the rear had failed. The explanation was to be found in the action of Prince Kun-in's cavalry brigade. When news came of the danger threatening Ponchiho, his Royal Highness marched from the neighbourhood of the coal mine, crossed the Tai-tsu, and appeared in the rear and on the flank of the enemy. Coming upon the Russian reserves, who had posted no vedettes, the Prince took them by surprise and opened fire with his machine guns from the cover of a wood. In a few seconds three hundred dead lay on the field and the whole force of the enemy retreated in confusion across the Tai-tsu. The Cossacks made no effort to retrieve

the disaster, but fled East, pursued for thirty miles by the Japanese cavalry.

This is the first occasion that I have known cavalry to be of service in Manchuria except for reconnaisance work and masking the advance of large bodies of infantry. In the mountainous region, where the movements of cavalry must be confined to bad and often impassable roads, it was admitted that the Cossacks had no chance of displaying their boasted dash and prowess. When we approached the plains and when the harvests were reaped we looked for some activity on the part of Russian horsemen: but the furrowed fields of friable loam, bristling with millet stubble, hard as bamboo and sharp as razors, evidently acted as a strong deterrent. Save when dismounted to cover the flank of the army retiring from Liao-yang, the Cossacks have done nothing more than demonstrate how great a reputation may be built on tradition. On the other hand, further observation has tended to modify the opinion of experts as to the quality of the Japanese cavalry and to acknowledge that it has some merits.

On the South, then, Penchiho was saved by the cavalry brigade, but North of the Tai-tsu the situation was unchanged. The strength and determination of the enemy were undiminished, and though the Japanese fought with courage and skill they could do no more than hold their positions.

Chapter XXXV

THE LAST STRUGGLE.

The end was drawing near. Under cover of darkness attacks were made on Bastion Hill and the heights to the South-east. They began at one in the morning and were attended with some loss, the enemy using hand grenades charged with tiny sharp-edged lozenges of steel that inflicted cruel wounds. At five o'clock a general advance was ordered, and we occupied the heights on the other side of the stream North of Bastion Hill. Progress, however, was very slow, the Russians remaining in strong position to the North whence they maintained a heavy cannonade. The army on our left continued to harass the railway North of Yentai, and strove to drive the enemy into the mountainous region on the East. The operations of the 12th were not very effective, though preparations had been made to envelope the Russians in three loops—one on the East, another on the South, a third on the West.

The 13th witnessed events of supreme importance, and was made memorable by one of the most desperate

and daring encounters that history records. North of Temple Hill rises a cluster of mountains united by broad ridges, and from the centre of which springs a lofty peak. Here the Russians were entrenched in force, and it was necessary to expel them before any further advance could be made. These heights lay directly in the path of the Okasaki brigade, which has distinguished itself for reckless courage and stubborn tenacity. Covered by the fire of six batteries at the foot of Bastion Hill and on the plain to the North-east, this brigade advanced to the assault. As they crossed the valley they came under heavy artillery fire from guns posted on the Northern heights. The movement began at dawn, and the sun was still low in the heavens when at the base of the mountains appeared lines of khaki and blue. Here progress was arrested. Stormed at by shot and shell the Japanese clung close to the side of the hill. Overhead screamed the shrapnel of their batteries searching the crest and reverse slope. From summit and ridge a brigade of the enemy swept their front with a blizzard of lead. Over the heads of the Russians, too, came the shells of their own batteries. It was a strange artillery duel, and raged with unabated fury the live-long day, making that cluster of brown hills a real inferno.

To advance looked impossible ; to remain seemed certain death. Yet the Japanese held fast with amazing courage. As the sun drew near to the West we saw them creeping slowly up the hill. Russians came out of

the trenches over the crest and poured into the prostrate ranks volley after volley. Guns drove them back to cover and the Japanese struggled upward a few paces. Again the rifles appeared above and again they vanished under the showers of shrapnel. So the conflict went on hour after hour, and with every hour we saw that our thinned lines were advancing.

It was nearly six o'clock in the evening when a company struggled to the summit. Then was witnessed a terrible combat that held us breathless. Every movement was distinctly visible from the plain. Thirty or forty men of that gallant company had resolved to capture the hill or die. Springing to their feet they dashed toward the enemy, who rose to meet them. The onset was fierce, but the advantage was altogether in favour of the defenders. Against that terrible fusilade no man could stand however brave and reckless. The survivors of the little band turned and fled. One man did not stop till he reached the bottom of the hill. Undismayed, another section ran forward and was rolled back, leaving several dark figures prone on the slope.

Out of this carnage rose a handful of desperate men. Without pause or hesitation they charged right to the crest. Fronting them stood a line of stalwart Russians, and again we saw as in a troubled dream the bloody work of bayonet. In a minute or two the end came. Another company ran forward to the edge of the slope, and over the summit tumbled the fragments of the heroic defence.

When I passed over the hill it was strewn with dead—many of whom had fallen under shrapnel fire. To the onlooker it is often a surprise that any survive these fierce assaults, but experience has shown that rifles at two hundred yards are less dangerous than at one thousand yards. The aim is less steady; the firing is nearly always wild, and most of the shots fly overhead. The slaughter begins a few moments after flight.

In this attack the Okasaki Brigade received indirect aid from a brigade of Guards who engaged the enemy on the East. A battalion advanced toward the high ground, two companies extended three paces apart, a second company at a distance of six hundred yards, and a third in column. They crossed the open, the leading company at the double, the other companies at a walk. The second line suffered, but the advance was not checked, and in time the troops came to the village of Karikilon at the foot of the hill. Here the second line took cover, while the first continued its rapid progress. The hill was steep; the grass was slippery, and there was no room for an extended front. The casualties were many, and two more companies were sent to reinforce. Ammunition ran short, but the attack was pressed until many of the Japanese came within twelve paces of the enemy's first line of trenches. Realising that the loss of this hill would bring disaster upon their entire force, the Russians fought with stubborn courage. Fresh troops poured into the trenches and prepared to deliver a counter attack, but at the critical moment the

artillery of the Guards opened with so much vigour and accuracy that the counter attack had to be abandoned.

Still the Japanese were unable to advance, and in order to retain their ground were obliged to entrench. Two more companies, under Colonel Ota, went forward to aid their sorely-pressed comrades, and throwing aside everything except rifle and bayonet, rushed into the heart of the battle.

"It is life or death!" shouted their commander as they swept into the firing line, and carrying the other companies with them, charged the trenches.

Nothing could withstand so fierce an onset. The first position was won, but the enemy clung gallantly to the second line of trenches, and their artillery devastated the front. Colonel Ota essayed an assault from a valley to the right, but was slain with a hundred of his men. Lieutenant Nakamura, sword in one hand and the flag of the Rising Sun in the other, fell within a few paces from the Russian trench, and the narrow valley was heaped up with dead and dying. The assault had failed, but the enemy withdrew in the night.

The way was now open for further advance, and after sunset two brigades marched North, and drove the enemy from the heights on which their guns were posted. These guns inflicted severe losses on the infantry, and delayed so long that they ought to have been captured. But the advance was not quick enough, and only ammunition wagons fell into our hands. Next day—the 14th—the enemy was retreating hurriedly on

all sides, and strenuous efforts were made to close in the three loops. While the army of the West pressed hard upon the railway and fought with the object of turning the enemy's right flank, the army of the Centre drove them back upon the Sandy river. Here the Russians did not escape without enormous losses. Across a broad cultivated valley North of the heights stormed on the previous day runs a low range of hills. Upon two of these eminences the enemy were entrenched, and had a strong rearguard of infantry to cover the retreat. Against this position the Japanese advanced in the afternoon. I watched them from a neighbouring hill as they approached from a flank and moved steadily forward in extended order under heavy rifle fire. But it was soon manifest that the *morale* of the enemy had been shaken by the disasters of the preceding days, for the resistance was not great. The hill on the South-west was carried with a rush, while that toward the East was still defended. Pressing slowly onward, the infantry drove the enemy across the low saddle, over which two or three thousand Russians were retiring. Then began the slaughter. The retreating force was caught between two rapidly converging fires. From the summit of the Western hill the Japanese swept the saddle and the plain beyond with rifle fire, while from the East came advancing lines. Through this deadly pass streamed the enemy. It was a spectacle terrible to behold. Over a thousand dead bodies marked the path of the Russians, yet never a white flag was raised. Even

on the plain they did not escape. Shrapnel pursued them beyond the banks of the river. On our right flank the pursuit was not so vigorous though the enemy suffered very severely, leaving many dead and wounded on the field. Our men were too exhausted to continue the carnage. They had fought without rest for seven days and the units had become mixed. On the night of the 14th hostilities were practically suspended. We were in possession of the South bank of the Sha-ho, and the Russians were entrenching on the North bank.

Thus ended General Kuropatkin's offensive movement. Fifty guns fell into our hands. We buried ten thousand dead Russians—funeral pyres blazed in every direction ; and everywhere we came upon new and ghastly evidences of the disaster that had overtaken the enemy.

Chapter XXXVI

A FORLORN HOPE.

PANLASANTZU, NOV. 1.

ON the brown plain to the North-west of Temple Hill rises a rocky mound—the scene of one of the most stirring episodes in the battle of the Sha-ho. The Chinese call it the Three Pillars of Stone, and hold it sacred to the god who is good to little children in the realms of Pluto. Grey craigs spring from the two extremities, and fall abruptly into the valley. In the centre, where the ridge bends like a strained bow, stands a Temple. Tower and walls are dark with the twilight of a thousand years, and look as old as the three pillars of rock that shoot up in their midst. It is a miniature Pantheon. From the gate over which that fierce warrior and national hero Kwan is the sleepless sentinel, you ascend to a series of tiny shrines crowded with painted images of Buddha and his many incarnations, and come at last to the altar of the god to whom bereaved parents pray for the repose of the souls of

their little ones. In the shadow of the grey craig, within hexagonal walls, sits the great god, Buddha, serene and contemplative, with a circle of disciples about him. Alas! the images are broken, and lie prostrate at the feet of the great Bud. From their placid brows have been plucked the gems with which piety adorned them, and in their breasts are gaping wounds made by sacriligious hands in search of hidden treasure. But the gods of the heathen have been avenged, for great was the slaughter of the men who overthrew their images and polluted their shrine.

At sunset on October the 11th the Three Pillars of Stone were held by the Russians—wardens of the mountain range against which the might of Japan had hurled itself on that fearful day. Under the hills to the South-west lay our infantry waiting the signal for a night attack. Until the sun sank below the red horizon the men looked intently across the furrowed fields and noted every feature of the landscape, for the night would be dark, and upon the accuracy and precision of every step hung victory or disaster. Under the best conditions a night assault is hazardous, and when a whole division is involved the difficulty is immense. How shall the soldiers keep touch in the darkness; how shall they start and arrive on the instant; how shall they know their objective; how shall the units be kept separate; how shall they distinguish friend from foe; how shall the attack be delivered simultaneously at several points on an extended and unseen front—in a word, how shall

eight thousand blind men act as one man endowed with vision, with the same purpose, the same impulse? That is the problem which the General had to solve. Every precaution was taken. Watches were set by one standard; a signal was agreed upon; the physical features of the country were carefully studied: the men put on their dark winter overcoats; a white band was on the left arm of each man. At midnight everything was ready. The scouts lay in the furrows. Behind them were six battalions extended in one close line with fixed bayonets. Fifty yards to the rear were the supports in column of company, and one hundred and fifty yards behind them in double column of company were the reserves. The orders were that the scouts should advance until they came under the enemy's fire, and then lie down while the first line moved forward to the attack, and supports and reserves waited the moment to join in the combat.

The horror of great darkness had fallen on the land. Not a star shone in the heavens. Suddenly the veil was rent asunder and from the Southern heights lept a tongue of flame. The signal? A pillar of fire and then darkness—even darkness that might be felt. Six battalions sprang to their feet as one man; the scouts rose from the furrows and moved forward swiftly and silently. It was one o'clock in the morning and the advance had begun. They passed through the village and came out upon the plain. The stubble crackled under their feet; no other sound broke the silence, and

darkness swallowed up the long line of bayonets. In the Mansion of Devils—that name the soldiers have given to the hill—the strength of the enemy was unknown. From the middle of the plain rose two small eminences and in the shadow of the Three Pillars stood a dozen houses surrounded by high mud walls. The eminences were trenched and on two sides of the cluster of cottages ran a seven-fold line of trenches—one close to the other like a maze. Toward these points the infantry moved slowly and silently in a wide crescent. On the left marched the Himaji regiment under Colonel Yasumura, and on the right was the Fukuchiyama regiment under Colonel Shiniozu. The brigade was commanded by Major-General Marui.

Shortly before three o'clock the scouts came upon the enemy and, obedient to orders, lay flat on the ground, while the bullets swept over them. In the darkness men always fire high and most of the shots fell among the reserves, and among the divisional staff behind the village. General Kanamura's horse was wounded by a stray bullet. The fight was raging when General Nozu left the Central army reserves in the valley behind the hills and rode toward the village. General Ramamura sent warning of the danger and implored him to return. The advice, however unwelcome, was sound, and General Nozu, with great reluctance, acknowledged that the Commander of an army has no right to expose himself without due cause. He accordingly withdrew.

Slowly the line of bayonets pressed onward, closely followed by the supports, who had now deployed and advanced in fighting formation. The objective of the right flank was a hill in rear of the Russian position; the left directed its steps to the Western spur of the Three Pillars of Stone; the centre marched against the cluster of houses. The right carried one of the eminences on the plain and, meeting with little resistance, began to close in upon the Three Pillars of Stone. Here, round the little cluster of cottages, was the heart of the fight. In front of the maze of trenches the ground was swept by a horizontal sheet of lead.

Into that deadly zone men rushed again and again to their fate. The frenzy of battle had seized them and they heeded not the prostrate forms under their feet. The trenches spurted fire and death, for the men who held them were brave, and their orders were to die to the last man rather than leave the position. They were the 37th Imperial Regiment fresh from Europe. Their faces were untanned by the heat and cold of Manchuria; their uniforms were new and clean, and the gold crowns on their shoulder-straps were untarnished.

We had been told more than once that the Japanese had not met the flower of the Russian army, and that from Europe would come another race of soldiers who would roll back the tide of war to the very walls of Tokyo. Here were the men from Europe: soldiers of the Imperial Regiment, brave as lions and sworn never to surrender. Long and stoutly they fought till the

trenches ran blood. Again and again the Japanese returned to the assault, and again and again they were driven back leaving a trail of dead. Fiercer and fiercer grew the conflict. At last the remnant of the Russians, losing hope of keeping the trenches, withdrew behind the walls of the compounds and into the houses. Here they had great advantage and availed themselves of it to the utmost. In vain the Japanese threw away their lives. Every wall was a fortress manned by fearless and resolute men.

"Who is ready to die for his country?" cried the colonel in command of the left flank. "Who will set fire to the houses?" Instantly came answer.

"I will lead the forlorn hope!" said Captain Sumita, and from the ranks stepped two hundred soldiers.

Captain Sumita placed himself at their head and forward they went shouting their dread battle cry. One mad rush and they were over the trenches and under the wall. Many had fallen, and from walls and houses swept a tornado of bullets. Reckless of life a handful of men struggled to pass the fatal barrier. One by one they dropped until not a man in that forlorn hope remained. The desperate enterprise had failed, and the enemy was still in possession of the houses. Near the front of the hamlet is a pool of stagnant water, close to which lay the Russian commander—wounded. To him an appeal was made.

"Why should your brave men sacrifice their lives?" asked an officer. "They have done enough to prove their courage. They are surrounded and cannot escape. Go into the village and advise them to surrender."

The wounded Russian gave the answer that might be expected of a gallant soldier.

"My orders were never to leave this place alive. My men must and will fight to the end."

A wounded sergeant was appealed to. He went into the village with what message none can say.

But the end was drawing near. The right flank met with little resistance and moved toward the centre of the fight. In time they came to the South of the hamlet where the enemy held the houses on each side of the road. The only approach was a fire-swept triangle commanded by a low wall and flanked by cottages. It was still night, and out of the black veil in front of the Japanese sprang tiny jets of flame from the rifles of the enemy. Into this deadly angle our infantry crowded after their leader. The officer who bore the regimental flag was shot down. From his nerveless hand the flag was taken by a second officer, who carried it forward a few yards and then dropped with a bullet through his body.

To the front sprang the regimental commander—Colonel Yasumura—and seizing the flag bore it onward. The air hummed with rifle bullets and men fell on every hand. Still they pressed into the front rank, trampling dead and dying under their feet. No man paused or

looked back after entering that deadly angle. The wall was nearly reached when the flag dropped from their leader's hand. He, too, had fallen.

"Fire the houses!" was the cry that rang through the night. Toward a little mud-walled cottage darted a handful of men. Door and window were forced and the thatched roof went up in flame. Through the red glare Russians and Japanese were seen shooting and stabbing. A gap was made in the wall of the compound and through it poured a torrent of dark uniforms. Another fierce struggle and another house was in flames while men fought under the burning rafters. Thus from house to house and from compound to compound swept fire and bayonet until the sky was crimson and the earth red. It was a scene that only Wiertz could have painted.

When I visited the village the Chinese were raking among the embers of their homes: the ground was littered with pieces of uniform, fragments of rifle stocks, charred bones, and here and there a skull which the dogs had knawed. Some Japanese soldiers were exhuming their comrades, over whom a few shovelfuls of earth had been thrown, and were placing the black and fearful forms on funeral pyres.

Step by step the Russians were driven out of the houses. On the hill behind they rallied again and prepared to renew the conflict. Up the steep Western spur the Japanese were already climbing, and toward the grey craig on the East another force was fighting its way.

Dawn was at hand. From the mountains on the East stole the grey light that revealed the Japanese steadily advancing—a *mêlee* of men, units, companies, battalions and regiments hopelessly mixed yet impelled by one purpose. In the darkness they had stumbled on the Russian artillery and had captured two guns. While securing these trophies they were thrown into a state of great alarm by the sound of horses. "Cossacks!" was the thought that flashed through everyone's mind. The Russian cavalry had crossed the plain and were about to make a counter attack! The Japanese infantry turned to meet the charge, and fired volleys into the horses before the discovery was made that it was not Cossacks but terrified and maddened horses of the Russian artillery.

At day-break the hill was in our possession. The remnant of the enemy had fled to the North, and village and fields were heaped up with dead. The forlorn hope had not died in vain.

Chapter XXXVII

THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW.

We were riding over a hill near the Sha-ho. The dead lay upon the slope like livid stains on a green carpet. In the trench—a deep scar across the brow of the hill—was a tangled web of crimson and purple and grey rent asunder by black hands and ashen faces.

Three days before I saw the tidal wave of war sweep over this hill of horrors. Out of the clouds came men in blue with rifles in their hands—a company of Japanese. Scattering, they sped down the slope and vanished in a brown cleft; in a moment they appeared once more, racing furiously up the hill.

From the earth sprang a grey line tipped with fire and steel. At sight of the Russians the men in blue halted and turned. Were they running away? A sword flashed in the air and the Japanese ranged themselves—a line of blue upon which rushed the grey crest like a tumultuous sea. The waves met and mingled—a heaving flood over which played the

lightning of steel. Blade in hand the Russian leader leapt forward to meet his foe. A gleam of light and the point of the Samurai sword pierced his neck. A jet of blood spurted from his nostrils and the steel dropped from his dying grasp. Another moment and the waves divided, leaving the hill flecked with grey forms. Broken and thinned, the blue wave swept on and engulfed the trench where the dead and dying lay.

Strenuous days followed laborious nights, when wounded died and living fought. How could anything in that trench be alive! It was an open grave heaped with dead.

"I saw his leg move," protested my interpreter.

Prone on his back lay a Russian soldier. His eyes looked into mine. Pillowed on a corpse, his couch was of dead men.

In a second we were off our horses and in the trench. Hs head was covered with clay that was dyed a dark crimson; his open mouth was filled with earth baked hard by the sun. Surely, he must be dead. The eyes sought mine and followed me.

With hasty fingers I probed the clay and found where the bullet had struck. It must have penetrated the brain. Still the eyes followed me. I probed again. The bullet had merely grazed the scalp. It was a case of concussion. We took a great-coat from a dead comrade at his side and dragged it under him. Yielding to threats, a Chinese servant got into the trench to help us As we raised the living from the

dead the stiffened limbs relaxed and the leg moved. With a cry of horror the Chinaman leapt out of the trench and fled screaming down the hill.

We lifted our burden out of the noisome pit and laid him on the ground; we broke the earthen gag and cleaned his mouth, and gave him drops of whisky and water. From his wounded head we scraped the crimsoned clay and saw that it might yet be well with him. And all the time his eyes sought mine.

Captain Okada rode to a cottage at the foot of the hill and brought back some Chinamen. They placed the soldier on a door and bore him away.

Three days later we entered a house filled with wounded Russian and Japanese. A wan face smiled upon us; two bright eyes welcomed us. It was our wounded soldier. He could not speak, but he nudged a comrade and pointed to the men who had plucked him out of the grave.

We rode toward the wood beyond the narrow valley where hundreds had fallen before that dread company in blue. A voice called to us. We turned and saw only the dead. A low, timorous voice haunted the dread stillness of this hecatomb. Our eyes wandered over the dead in search of a sign of the living. A bush opened as though stirred by the wind, and out of the green peeped a wan face.

The man's legs were shattered: one limb hung loose like the empty sleeve of a coat. He had bound up his wounds and crawled into the bush, where he dug

a shallow grave in which to hide himself from the enemy whom he had been taught to fear even in death. A few crusts of black bread and a bottle of water had kept life in him for three days, until the appearance of a European gave him courage to betray his hiding place. We took a coat from a dead soldier, and with two rifles made a stretcher upon which the groaning burden was borne to hospital.

In the nullah through which the enemy fled under murderous fire, the dead and dying lay like leaves of an autumn forest. Here I happened upon a strangely pathetic group—a wounded Russian attended by two Japanese soldiers. They had made him a bed of coats, had emptied their water bottles down his parched throat, had lighted a cigarette for him, and had settled down for a comfortable talk, for wounds and death have a tongue that needs no interpreter.

Near the entrance to this valley of the shadow was a field of maize. The sheaves stood like towers of gold. Days before, when the guns woke the echoes among the hill, and this valley was an active volcano, I saw the farmer fleeing like Lot from the city of destruction. Children clung to his dark blue robe, while his wife stumbled with a bundle in her arms.

The sheaves called in vain to the husbandman, for when death is reaper the harvest of the earth is ungarnered. Suddenly, as we looked, one of those golden towers burst open, and out darted a pale figure with uplifted hands.

"Kick him up!" It is not pleasant to see a soldier on his knees, and a Japanese is the proudest of men. The Russian was unhurt, but had been hiding for three days and nights without food. He, too, had waited for the sight of a European, and was not content until he had from Captain Okada a note in Japanese that gave him courage to approach the temple on the hill.

Thus did we make our way over the field of battle until we came again to the hill of the dead. Upon the green slope, trampled red with bloody feet, lay the drummer who had sounded the alarm. His hands still grasped the drumsticks, his face was driven through the the drum, and by his side was stretched a charred and naked figure upon which the fire of a grenade had fed. About him lay his comrades like warriors taking their rest. They had fought a good fight, and slept the sleep that knows not waking.

Chapter XXXVIII

MUKDEN IN SIGHT.

STORMING A HILL.

HAVING struck their blow the Japanese made strenuous efforts to envelope the defeated and demoralised enemy. Four roads were open to the retreating armies. On the East they were falling back through Taelin toward Wushun: on the West they had the railway and the main road to Mukden: and between these points were two roads, from Panlasantzu and Hialiuhotzu, leading North. About these communications the Japanese strove to cast four loops from which there could be no escape. Our left flank endeavoured to drive the Russians from the railway into the mountainous region, while our right pressed them hard among the hills.

The failure of this enterprise was due to one cause. Our force was too small. Though we had suffered serious loss and though the men were exhausted by

continuous fighting, so eager were they to reap the full reward of victory that they were prepared to take any risk. But the caution of the older leaders forbade pursuit beyond the Sha-ho, and this time their prudence was justified. North of the river the Russians had entrenched positions and the country was more favourable for defence than we had supposed. Their powers of resistance too were still great, and their artillery served them well. Yet neither defences nor powers of resistance would have availed had the Japanese been as numerous as General Kuropatkin seemed to imagine.

It is a remarkable feature of the war—the complete breakdown of the Russian Intelligence branch. From the first they grossly and even ludicrously exaggerated the forces opposed to them. General Kuroki's army was magnified twofold. General Keller reported that at Mou-tien-ling he was repulsed by a greatly superior force, whereas he was driven back by four companies of infantry! On another occasion a whole division was checked by a single battalion whose commander adopted the simple and familiar ruse of posting his men in small groups over a wide front. The truth is that the army was too small to risk vigorous and prolonged pursuit or to make those extended flanking movements that were so successful before the concentration of the Russian forces and the abandonment of attempts to relieve Port Arthur. Some critics have sought to prove that the Japanese kept Port Arthur as a bait to lure the enemy South and that the prolonged resistance of General

Stoessel was of the highest service to Marshal Oyama. Nothing could be further from the fact. The Japanese considered the fall of Port Arthur essential to their command of the sea: it was urgently needed also as the only port free from ice in the Winter. Yet had they realised for a moment that General Stoessel could hold out after the first week of August they would have contented themselves with an investment. That, at any rate, is the deliberate statement of men responsible for the conduct of the campaign. And they had reason, for Port Arthur not merely retarded progress in Manchuria but twice robbed the Japanese of the fruits of hard won victory.

From a hill, near the village of Shaho, I saw Mukden on the morning of October the 16th. In the grey distance, across the plain which autumn had tinted with purple and brown, rose wall and towers—a vague shadow that melted into mist, like a city of dreamland. Away to the West among the pine groves thundered the guns of the Western army, and in the little hamlet at my feet was assembled the detachment that was to try its luck on the other side of the river and to meet with the first reverse to the Japanese arms. In the hope of striking the enemy from the rear and compelling them to abandon their first line of defence, the detachment, under General Yamada, crossed the Sha-ho, captured two guns, and seemed on the point of accomplishing its purpose when a division of the Russians came down from the North-east and simultaneously an attack was

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delivered from the West. Surrounded on both flanks the regiment cut its way back, but left behind nine field and five mountain guns—the first guns lost by the Japanese.

South of the Sha River the enemy still held one position until October the 27th. Its tactical value to the Russians was insignificant, though its importance was great as a post of observation. Whoever retained the hill could survey the lines of both armies and note their movements. Haitaoshan, which means the Mountain of Irregular Crest, is about twelve miles North-east by East of the coal mine at Yentai. It is a four peaked hill that looks as if it had been riven from the wild ranges that run Eastward, like a myriad writhing dragons, and set down on the river flat. Bare heights bend round it on the South, across the shallow stream: to the East rises the land of monstrous furrows—brown hills and brown valleys—while on the North stretches the grey plain of Mukden. Haitaoshan runs almost East and West and from the peaks descend ridges like ribs. The Western peak is the highest and is crowned with the ruins of a small temple surrounded by an ancient wall. The Eastern shoulder falls sharply into a green hollow. Between these points are three small eminences or peaks joined by bow-shaped saddles. The mountain is very steep and the slopes are clothed with long fine grass slippery as ice.

In this stronghold—a spy and a menace to our investing lines—lay the 2nd battalion of the 18th

Regiment of Sharp-shooters. They had made themselves very snug and secure. Along the summit ran a deep trench by which a man might walk from one end of the mountain to the other and not be seen. The trench was covered and gave access to three breastworks built about the peaks like redoubts and flanked by trenches. Into these shelters the Russians had carried stoves—for the night and early morning were bitterly cold—and an abundant supply of food and drink as though prepared for a siege. It was evident that they feared a night attack and had taken wise precautions. Assault whether by night or day must come from the Eastern slope, since that alone was assailable. Their design was to draw the Japanese—should they come in the darkness—beyond the first line of defence on the East across the narrow ridge toward the second peak, behind which were hidden five or six machine guns that would sweep the approach with a sheet of lead and leave not a man alive. It was a very clever scheme, carefully thought out and skillfully arranged. Had the Japanese tried to storm the position in the night they must have failed and have suffered heavy loss. But just when you think that you have caught the habit of the Japanese and feel disposed to prophesy, they do something quite unexpected. And so it happened, unfortunately for the Russian plan, that Haitaoshan was assailed not at night but in broad day, and was captured with the loss of only one hundred and seventy men, of whom seventy were killed.

On the night of the 26th of October a message was brought from Head-Quarters that at eight o'clock next morning a certain mountain eight miles from Bastion Hill would be bombarded. The invitation did not sound promising, for artillery duels had long been daily episodes, and are rarely interesting save when they pave the way for infantry. However, we went and were rewarded by a notable example of artillery and infantry working together as smoothly and effectively as if they were the fly wheel and the driving wheel of one engine.

South of Haitaoshan, at a distance of about three thousand yards, rise precipitous hills, on one of which, well hidden from the enemy's view, was a field battery. To the East, among the heights, was posted another battery, and to the West on a lower elevation was a third battery of captured Russian guns. North of Haitaoshan the hills are more remote, and to bring their artillery within effective range of our batteries the enemy would have to expose their guns in the open.

As soon as the morning mist cleared and revealed the heights beyond the Sha-ho dotted with dark figures, the bombardment began. From the batteries on the East and South came a slow and steady succession of shells directed against the trenches on the Eastern slope and the breastworks on the summit of the mountain. The Russians strove to reply from the cover of a low ridge on the North-west, but their efforts were futile. The range was too great, and our batteries could have

been hit only by accident. It was notable that whereas the Japanese used high explosive shells against the trenches, the enemy employed shrapnel. The cannonade continued without incident until one o'clock in the afternoon, when the infantry began to advance.

They came out of trenches on the rising ground to the South and passed from the green hollow toward the Eastern slope. It was a steep climb and slippery, but the Japanese, mindful of every detail, had tied pieces of rope over their boots and climbed like experienced mountaineers. At first one company appeared and made quickly for the shoulder of the hill. Another followed, and then a third marched out of a dark grove on the South and spread along the rib that descended from the first peak. On the shoulder of the mountain the resistance was slight, though several Japanese fell before the enemy withdrew to the first breastwork or redoubt. Clustered like bees under the shoulder the infantry lay while the reserves advanced from the hollow and the guns concentrated their fire on the first peak. Here were Russians plainly enough, though how many we could not say until the shells began to drive them from cover. At first singly, then in twos and threes they appeared, running toward the second peak and vanished over the crest. Shrapnel pursued them, for it was against trenches only that the Japanese used common shell. Again the little redoubt was wreathed in smoke and clouds of black earth, and again men ran from it like ants whose nest has been

disturbed. So the bombardment went on until it seemed that no living thing could be within the circle of fire. And all this time the infantry lay under the shoulder of the mountain and on the ribbed slope. It was "dead" ground they clung to—a swift incline that shielded them from rifle fire, though not more than one hundred yards from the enemy. For two hours they remained in this position, while Russians passed to and fro between the first and second peaks, and an officer raised his head above the breastwork to see if the Japanese made any movement. It looked as if the attack had failed; yet so great is the confidence inspired by victory that not one of the foreign observers doubted for an instant the ability of the Japanese infantry to accomplish their purpose. Now the guns were seized with new fury and the mountain became an active volcano. Another moment and there was silence so deep and solemn that you felt as though suddenly roused from sleep to discover that the battle and the bloodshed were only a dream.

At three o'clock a movement was observed in the black cluster under the shoulder of the hill. A sergeant—without orders, I am told—rose and climbed rapidly toward the first breastwork. He was followed by about a dozen soldiers. As they approached the Russians came out of the trench and stood behind the redoubt with rifles at their shoulder. A splutter of bullets and one or two Japanese rolled over: but the rest went on with a rush and came close to the breast-

work almost upon the bayonets of the Russians who leapt forward to meet them. Brave and desperate men—Russian and Japanese! They closed for a second and then the Japanese ran back—all that was left of them. The gallant sergeant quickly found that he had ventured into a hornets' nest. On his left was a trench lined with riflemen: in front was the redoubt bristling with bayonets and darting fire, and suddenly on his right came another body of Russians. The position of this handful of Japanese looked hopeless, when just at the critical moment a shell flew over their heads—it must have singed their hair—and burst right among the enemy. The half dozen who came out of this fray lost no time in seeking the cover of the shoulder of the hill.

Meanwhile another company was advancing up the slope under shrapnel fire from the Russian guns which had abandoned the duel with our artillery and sought—too late—to arrest the progress of our infantry. Once more the batteries pounded away at the breastwork and trenches and once more the enemy ran out of the inferno. They had done their duty with amazing courage and audacity: they had covered the retirement of their comrades and now sought safety in flight. As yet it was impossible to realise that the position had been evacuated and that the second and third redoubts and lines of trenches were empty. At five minutes to four o'clock the guns ceased fire: the infantry rose from under the shelter of the hill; and from the ribbed spur. With rapid strides they drew

near to the first peak and pressed up the steep slope from the South. A solitary Russian appeared running at full speed and vanished over the crest. There was a few minutes pause to take breath and then an officer moved on toward the second breastwork followed by a soldier waving the flag of the Rising Sun as a signal to the artillery. No shot came from the little fort and the officer went quickly forward to the third peak. Again no enemy. And so to the temple on the highest summit. The Russians were scurrying down the hill into the valley and across the Sha-ho, while the Japanese stood on the crest and fired down upon them.

Chapter XXXIX

THE STORY OF A FAMOUS BRIGADE.

THE record of the Okasaki Brigade covers almost every important action in which General Kuroki was engaged. It bore the brunt of fifteen great fights and won laurels that can never fade. To measure the capacity of a General by his casualty list, as was our unfortunate habit in South Africa, is folly, yet the test may be applied to a brigade that has been in the field seven months.

On March 26th, when General Okasaki landed at Chinampo, he had in his command six thousand men, of whom only four thousand were combatants. The casualties of the brigade from that date to October were 3,889; 675 men were killed and 3,214 wounded, including 32 officers killed and 93 wounded. Only three men out of the six thousand died from disease in seven months—an almost incredible record and convincing proof of the immunity of Japanese soldiers against the consequences of hardship, privation, exposure and insanitary conditions that devastate European armies.

Of the original number of combatants practically all were slain or wounded: not a single battalion was commanded by the officer who landed with it at Chinampo, and one battalion changed its leader no fewer than three times.

These figures prove not only the desperate character of the fighting but the unshaken *morale* of the Japanese infantry, for, despite these enormous losses, the Okasaki Brigade was as eager as ever to be foremost in battle.

Success in war depends on the spirit of the soldiers and the character and skill of their leaders. Rarely has the combination of these qualities been as perfect as in this famous brigade which is raised in the Northern provinces of Japan. Their commander is a man who inspires unbounded confidence in his judgment, while his modesty and simplicity of manner have won the affection of his soldiers.

General Okasaki belongs to a race of Samurai or fighting clans and enlisted in the Imperial army. At the age of eighteen years he fought for the restoration of the temporal power of the Mikado and was severely wounded—twice by bullets and once by the sword. While pursuing an enemy on foot a man darted out of a bush and thrust his sword into the young soldier's side. Stepping back one pace Okasaki struck off the head of his assailant. In the Civil War of 1879 he was again wounded. A subaltern in the force sent to attack the enemy's rear, he landed at Nagasaki and received two bullets that kept him in hospital for three weeks.

In the advance on Kumamoto he commanded a battalion and was afterwards promoted to the rank of captain. He was a major in 1885 and five years later was appointed aide-de-camp to the Prince Imperial. At the outbreak of war with China, Okasaki was a lieutenant-colonel and acted as chief of the staff to the 4th Division in Osaka. In 1897 he was chief of the staff of the Japanese garrison at Wei-hai-wei and after the evacuation of that port became a member of the General Staff in Tokyo. From the chief staff office of the 2nd Division he passed in 1901 to the command of the brigade which has proved itself in every way worthy of so gallant and experienced a leader.

The brigade sailed from Ujina on March 20th and disembarked at Chinampo six days later. It was a regiment of this brigade—the 16th regiment—that hoisted the Imperial flag on the Conical Hill at Chiu-lien-cheng, and another regiment—the 30th—that pursued the fugitive enemy to Hamatan and captured the Russian batteries. These are the most brilliant episodes in the battle of the Yalu. After the occupation of Feng-hoang-cheng, General Okasaki was in the first fighting line and held the Pass of Mou-tien-ling, where he repulsed two counter attacks by greatly superior forces. On July 31st he led his brigade from Mou-tien-ling through the mountains east to assist the 12th Division in the fight at Yu-shu-ling. It was the hottest day of the year, and General Okasaki was suffering from dysentry. He was unable to ride, and marched the

whole way in the blazing sun. On the battlefield his pain was so intense that he ordered the doctor to inject chloroform into his intestines, and continued to direct the operations.

"I never fought a more interesting fight," observed the General. "It was like hunting hares."

I need not tell again how the Okasaki Brigade struck the right flank of the enemy at Pinlei and rolled it back into the mountains; how it seized the precipitous height under which the Russians were retreating; and how it slew seven hundred with the loss of only seventeen men. In the advance on the Tang-ho—a movement that forced the enemy to retire from Anshantien and fall back upon the defences before Liao-yang—the brigade was assigned an important part. On the night of August 26th General Okasaki made an attack which the Japanese claim to be unprecedented in the history of war. The whole brigade stormed the position on Kyu-cho-lei and carried it with the bayonet. Not a shot was fired as the men moved silently forward through the millet fields, keeping in close touch so that when they reached the hill the brigade charged as one man. The moon shone with greater brilliance on that night than I have ever seen it shine in any land, yet not a sign nor a sound came from the valley. The men had wrapped their bayonets in millet straw.

The days that followed were crowded with stirring incident. On the 27th of August General Okasaki assaulted and took Tsuego, on the 28th Sonkasai, on

the 29th and 30th Sekisoshi, and on the 31st Kantong, thereby opening the way to Am-ping and the passage of the Tai-tsu river—the flanking movement that sent General Kuropatkin in flight to Mukden.

In four previous chapters I have described the fierce struggle on the North bank of the Tai-tsu, where, with one and a half divisions, General Kuroki kept at bay and finally drove back upon the railway five Russian divisions led by General Kuropatkin himself. Without exaggeration it may be said that General Kuropatkin was defeated by one regiment of the Okasaki Brigade, for he made the hill known as Manjuyama the pivot of his attack, and on September 1st that position was won by General Okasaki and held after three days and nights of the bloodiest work in this or any war. Again and again did the Russians strive to recover the hill. Nor did they abandon the attempt until two thousand had been slain. The scene on the morning of September 4th was one of the most awful I had ever beheld. For two days the Japanese fought on a few handfuls of dry rice. It was during that three days fight that General Okasaki put the discipline of his men to the severest test that could ever be imposed. During a counter-attack in the dark, General Okasaki, leading some reserves into action, found friend and foe so mingled that he could not tell at which point help was most needed. He solved the difficulty by ordering the trumpeter to sound the cease fire. Despite the fact that the Japanese were scattered and were engaged in a hand to hand struggle

in which a second's hesitation meant certain death, they obeyed the signal as one man.

"When I saw that," said the General with a proud look in his eyes, "I was sure that we could keep the position."

Manjuyama has been named Okasaki-yama, or Okasaki Hill, in honour of that great victory.

These achievements might well suffice for the record of any brigade, yet they are only the preface to the chronicle of the deeds of Okasaki. In the seven days fighting that repulsed the Russian assault and swept General Kuropatkin across the Sha-ho with the loss of sixty or seventy thousand men and fifty guns, the Okasaki Brigade was the steel wedge that General Kuroki drove into the heart of the Russian centre, and that forced the enemy to act on the defensive once more. On the afternoon of October 11th General Okasaki took Temple Hill—the isolated rock crowned by a temple three or four miles North-west of the coal mine. It was at first intended that the Matsunaga Brigade should occupy Bastion Hill—the lofty height with a bastion-like summit—which was the centre of the Russian resistance on the morning of the 11th. Three battalions of the Matsunaga Brigade marched from camp at three o'clock in the morning and advanced against this formidable position. Forcing back the enemy from their front they came to the Western slope of the hill, where the guns began to play upon them. With one battalion on the right and two on the left, the brigade

pressed on under showers of shrapnel. The Japanese batteries were to have supported the assault by engaging the Russian artillery, but our guns were outranged and could not reach the enemy's batteries. Seeing the disadvantage under which their assailants laboured from want of this support, a considerable body of Russians attacked the flank of the battalion on the left. This was the opportunity for which our artillery in the shadow of a rocky hill had been anxiously watching. In a moment the shells began to fall thick and fast among the enemy who retired in great disorder pulling their wounded comrades into the pine grove in the ravine. Undaunted by this failure, the Russians held fast by the right and delivered another counter-attack which was repelled by a small company of Japanese.

Meanwhile, General Okasaki, whose brigade was posted on our left in front of the coal mine, waited the moment to advance on Temple Hill. Hours passed and Bastion Hill remained in the hands of the enemy. At last General Okasaki decided that it would be imprudent to wait longer. An attack on Temple Hill might relieve the pressure on the Matsunaga Brigade. Accordingly the order was given to advance. At eleven o'clock the 30th regiment on the right moved forward to the village of Kuchapuzu, about two miles to the South-west of Temple Hill, while the 16th regiment reached Palasantzu, a village about the same distance to the South-east. Happily, the Russians appeared not to notice this movement, although it was made across the

open fields. Only after the regiments were under cover in the villages did the enemy's guns pay them any attention. Little or no damage was done. At half past four in the afternoon the brigade left the villages and advanced in line of battle, forming a great crescent with Temple Hill between the two points. The left moved swiftly over the furrowed fields among sheaves of giant millet, while the right descended into the deep bed of a shallow stream and presently appeared on the plain. I need not tell again the story of that splendid advance. Forty guns opened on the lines, yet on they went, quietly and steadily, now kneeling to return the rifle fire from the road under Temple Hill : now at a double. At last they came to the foot of the hill, having driven North the remnant of the first line of Russian rifles. The 16th regiment on the left was a little in advance and fought its way up the hill, suffering heavily from shrapnel. A private was the first to reach the temple and had climbed several feet up the stone wall when a shell scattered his brains. His bayonet—bent, broken and bloody—stuck fast in the wall. In this assault the brigade had 937 casualties, most of them during the advance across the fields. Though every shell killed or wounded several, the men never paused to look back.

While this assault was in progress Colonel Shimada was ordered to seize a rocky, hog-backed height to the North. The force under his command was only two companies, one battalion and two companies having gone to the aid of the Matsunaga Brigade. A new battalion

was therefore given to him, and the Colonel advanced toward the village of Sanchautsu, North-east of Bastion Hill. Behind him in a long, thin column marched his men. Arriving within rifle range of the village they deployed and went quickly forward.

Sanchautsu is a long, straggling collection of stone houses sheltered by pine trees, on the fringe of which appeared a strong force of the enemy. Breaking through the left flank of this line Colonel Shimada entered the village at the head of his men. Here the fight waxed more and more furious, for the Russians had taken cover in the native houses and had to be driven out with the bayonet. Near the middle of the village stands a wine shop—a large, stone building with an extensive compound surrounded by a high, stone wall, loop-holed for defence against bandits. In this compound were many Russians. Mounting to the roof of the next house the Japanese opened fire and drove them into the wine shop. Ladders were then brought, and while the Japanese scaled the wall the enemy fled. The sun was setting when this terrible fight ended, and left us in possession of Sanchautsu and the rising ground to the north.

Before dawn on the 12th, Bastion Hill was taken by the Matsunaga Brigade, and General Okasaki advanced from Temple Hill toward the hog-back of rock that runs North into a horse-shoe cluster of high hills. Only a few Russians remained in the trenches and Rocky Hill was easily captured, but when the sun

rose and the morning mist cleared, the enemy's guns concentrated their fire on the position and many were killed and wounded. The Japanese sought shelter in a pine grove on the left slope and remained there all day. On the right flank the situation was the same and the troops continued in their positions, awaiting the advance of other forces with which they had to co-operate. Thus ended the 12th day of October. That night the Matsunaga Brigade was ordered East to fill the gap between two columns on the right flank, where the position near Ponchiho was extremely critical.

A forced march was necessary lest the enemy should discover this weak point in our defence and break through. Making tripods with millet stalks the men lighted fires and cooked their rice. Fifteen minutes after receiving the order they were on the road. The night was intensely dark and cold; a storm of sleet and hail overtook them and they lost their way. Yet before dawn the brigade reached the foot of Chosen-lei, fifteen miles South-east of Bastion Hill, and the gap was covered. Overcome with fatigue of hard fighting and hard marching the weary soldiers lay down on the cold ground and slept. Their leader did not close his eyes that night.

Walking in the darkness among the prostrate ranks, General Matsunaga felt with pride that he need have no fear of the morrow. Men who slept so soundly holding their rifles in their hands at the foot of a hill occupied by an unknown force of the enemy might be depended

upon in any emergency. At daybreak a few rifle shots sounded the alarm. Up sprang the brigade ready for action. A regiment of Russians appeared on the hill. They were evidently amazed to find Japanese soldiers where not a sign of them was visible at sunset. The enemy had no guns, whereas the brigade had two field-pieces, which opened fire and drove the Russians from Chosen-lei. A cause of great anxiety was thereby removed, and our line of defence was materially strengthened.

On October the 13th the Okasaki Brigade was ordered to take the enemy's position on the horse-shoe cluster of hills to the north of Temple Hill. The foot hills were already in our possession, but the difficult task remained. In a former chapter I have described the attack as I saw it from a neighbouring height. At dawn the brigadier detected a few men on the nearest peak, and sent a young officer—Lieutenant Shima—with two sections to learn who they were. Ascending the slope, Lieutenant Shima found the enemy's trenches empty, and was about to return when there suddenly came round the corner of the hill a large group of soldiers. In the dim light of early morning he was unable to discover whether they were Russians or Japanese.

"Who are you?" shouted the officer. Rifles replied and instantly the Japanese, dropping into the the trench, prepared for the attack which they knew would not be delayed. The Russians approached in

overwhelming numbers and a fierce fight ensued. Of these two gallant sections and their officer not a single man remained alive or unwounded. But help was at hand. First a company and then a battalion rushed to the rescue and the first position was won. Here the Japanese awaited the development of an attack on the Russian flank, but the plan miscarried and for hours they were exposed to heavy artillery fire from which they suffered severely. The situation grew desperate, yet the brigade clung to the slope.

Lieutenant-Colonel Nihira had foreseen the extreme difficulty of the task and realised that the chances of living through it were small. Before placing himself at the head of his battalion he took out of his pockets all confidential papers and the portraits of his children, which it was his custom to hang upon the wall of any house in which he might be quartered. Having burned these papers and photographs he led his men forward to the hill where he halted for a moment to impress upon them the importance of their mission and urged them never to turn their back upon the enemy. Colonel Nihira was greatly beloved by his men and they vowed to follow him to the death. At three o'clock the second height was stormed and then came the final struggle. For three long hours the men lay on the slope while shrapnel thinned their ranks and shells sweeping over them fell among the enemy's rifles on the crest.

Seeing the terrible position of this battalion General Okasaki sent to its aid another battalion commanded by

Lieutenant-Colonel Taniyama who arrived only in time to learn that his gallant friend and comrade Colonel Nihira and most of his officers had fallen in the fight. Dashing out of the trench, Colonel Taniyama cried: "How can I alone remain alive!" and would have hurled himself into the fire swept zone had not his men dragged him back into the trench.

The death of Colonel Nihira and of so many comrades roused the men to frenzy. Two companies sprang from the trench and rushed forward up the hill. I have told how they were rolled back and how they returned like an ever diminishing wave until at sunset I saw against the grey sky line a struggling mass of men shooting, bayonetting, wrestling and stoning one another. At six o'clock the hill was taken and the slope was slippery with blood. It bears the name Nihirayama, or Nihira's Hill, in memory of a brave soldier. One battalion lost all its officers save two, and of the other battalion only five officers survived.

Even now the day was not ended though the sun was sinking below a crimson horizon. The enemy was still entrenched in a strong position stretching due East from the plain under Nihirayama. Against this hill a regiment of the Okasaki Brigade was moving from a grove on the slope of Nihirayama, seventeen hundred metres from Lengesan—the name of the Russian position. To reach its destination the regiment had to descend the slope and cross the open fields under a heavy cannonade. Between the two positions is a grove

of pines in which the Japanese found shelter after their first dash. In a few minutes they came out and ran to the foot of the hill. Many fell in the advance, but the survivors struck the enemy hard on the left flank, and there was another of those awful hand-to-hand fights which one recalls with a shudder.

In the end the Russians fled with their guns. Twice men and horses with the batteries were shot down, and twice they were replaced under fire. Had the right flank of the Japanese been as fortunate as the left, these guns would have been added to the trophies of the seven days' fight.

This is the short record of the Okasaki Brigade. It is typical of the Japanese infantry, and will serve to show what the unhappy Russians had to contend against.

Chapter XL

TO PORT ARTHUR.

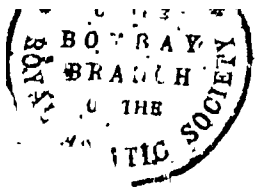
THE reader is now asked to transport himself on the magic carpet of his imagination to that great fortress at the Southern extremity of the Kwantung Peninsula, whose occupation by Russia must be regarded as the *fons et origo* of the war. I have already described how little the Mikado's strategists suspected that Port Arthur was capable of prolonged resistance against determined and repeated assault; how materially their plan of campaign would have been modified had their calculations been more accurate; and yet how essential it was to their complete command of the sea that this ice-free port should pass into their hands. It was on October 8th, a month after his retreat from Liao-yang, that General Kuropatkin exhorted the army in Mukden to renewed efforts, by the assurance that the time had come for a triumphant advance, and that the Czar had at length given him a sufficient force to command victory. But we know that the dismayed and distracted Ministers at St. Petersburg had commanded the General to strike one last despairing blow for the relief of the fortress.

We know, also, that on the following day Field-Marshal Oyama was obliged, by the seriousness of the Russian movements, to engage in battle, although his own desire had been to refrain from action until the expected news of the fall of Port Arthur had arrived. In their estimate of the garrison's capacity for further resistance, the Russians were more correct than their foes, for had he carried out his predilection, Oyama would have lingered in his position till the dawn of the New Year. As will be shown in the following chapters, the condition of the stronghold was by no means so desperate as was imagined by friend and enemy alike; and, as a matter of fact, the surrender, when it did come, was, in the opinion of many competent to arrive at a verdict, premature, and not the occasion of sheer necessity.

The Japanese in Manchuria, however, seemed confident that the end was at hand. One heard the capture spoken of as an impending event, that might any morning prove to be a reality; and I have little doubt that in the background of the Field Marshal's schemes lay the expectation that he would soon receive the welcome reinforcement of General Nogi's legions. I owe it to the exceptional kindness of the military authorities that they fell in with my request to be allowed to detach myself from General Kuroki's command and to turn my steps southward. When we correspondents were released from the wearisome and exasperating detention in Tokyo, and were at length allowed to land in the theatre of war, we were given

clearly to understand that each must remain with the particular command to which he was allotted, and that any attempt to break away and attach himself to a different portion of the army would render one liable to condign punishment, in the form of a restricted or cancelled permit. These conditions involved less of a lottery than might, superficially, appear to be the case, for the scale of operations was so gigantic that there was fair reason to hope that everyone would witness a good share of the fighting. Some might miss this engagement and some that, but as it was evident that every available Japanese soldier would be required at one point or another, there was not much risk of being left ingloriously on lines of communication, or of eating one's heart out in inaction when stupendous doings were being enacted at another part of the area of warfare. Still, I must own to a peculiar sense of gratification when the permission arrived for me to proceed to Port Arthur, and need hardly say that I lost as little time as possible in availing myself of the privilege. Of course, it entailed the loss of witnessing the fierce struggle before Mukden—even a war correspondent cannot be North and South at the same time—but I had seen my share of the fighting between the armies in the field, and was confident of the result. The surrender of Port Arthur was a far more important and stirring episode in the history of the war than another defeat, on however grand a scale, of Kuropatkin's gallant but disheartened soldiers.

I will not delay the narrative by describing my progress south to General Nogi's command. Suffice it to say that fear lent wings to my feet—fear, lest I should arrive too late. But, however eager my desire to proceed with all speed, the means available, the state of the country, and the war conditions prevailing, did not conduce to rapid travelling, and I arrived almost on the eve of the surrender, and counted myself highly fortunate in doing so. My credentials at once obtained for me the kindest reception from General Nogi and his Staff, and I was privileged to be an eye-witness of the proceedings that attended the handing over of the proud fortress to the triumphant Japanese. Of the awful fighting that for months preceded the final act it is not my duty to speak. The assaults by land and sea, the mines and counter-mines, the spade work above ground and below, the gradual advance of the trenches, the nearer approach of the crescent of siege artillery, the ferocious bayonet struggles in attack and defence, the ghastly stories of empalements on merciless stakes, of destruction of life by grenade and bomb, of living bodies torn to shreds on barbed wire entanglements—these have been described by other pens, wielded by those who have the authority of personal knowledge. I simply present to the reader the record of my own experiences.

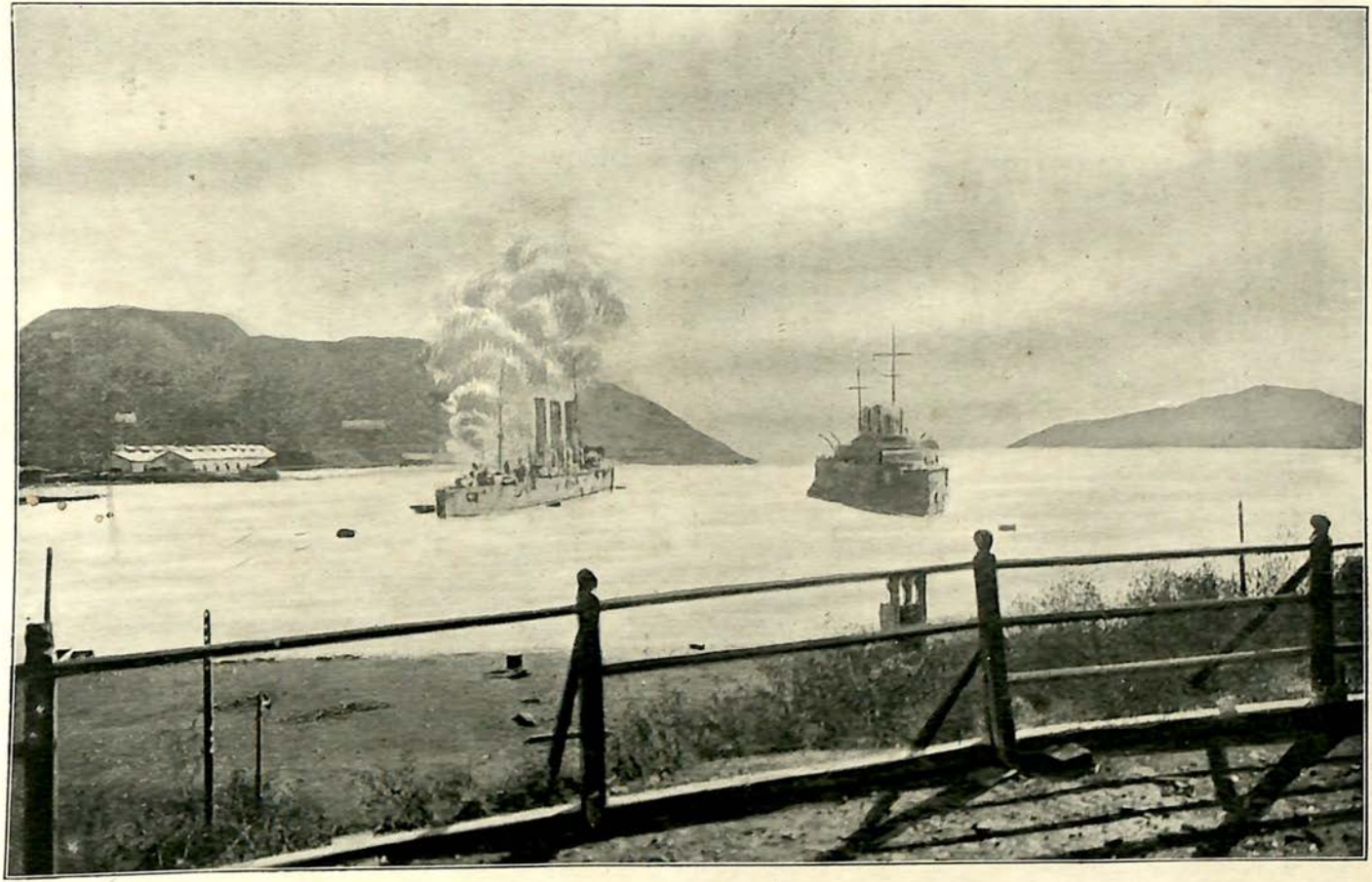


Chapter XLI

THE SURRENDER

THE first day of the New Year was drawing to a close when a Russian officer came riding toward our outposts. A Cossack mounted on a shaggy pony carried before him a flag of truce. Their appearance at such a moment not less than the grave looks of the young soldier betokened business of importance. Halting at some distance from the enemy's lines the Cossack sounded a parley, and a Japanese officer whose keen eye had followed every movement of the strangers went out to meet the envoy of the besieged fortress. He returned with a letter in his hand, and the Russian ensign rode back to Port Arthur.

New Year's Day is a Japanese festival, and even in the camp of the investing army custom held revel. Visits were made and hospitalities exchanged, while comrades fought their way up Bodai and looked down from the shattered peak into the quivering heart of the city. None dreamed that the long struggle was ended, and that the gallant defenders were preparing to lay



Russian Warship on Fire, Port Arthur.

[*facing p.* 340

down their arms. At dawn a strange stillness descended upon the narrow peninsula. Under the burden of silence, hills that for months had been charged with volcanic energies shrank into mounds of brown earth, and valleys and gorges that had pulsated with the sound of Titanic combat became mute as the grave. It was a new land in which we awoke—a land of unnatural silence that seemed full of portent. What had happened? Was this weird calm the precursor of a hurricane or was it the end? We wondered as we walked to the village where General Nogi had his Head-quarters.

"Port Arthur has fallen!"

That was the greeting. Not a trace of exultation! The Staff Officer might have been announcing a fall in the temperature. "Port Arthur has fallen!" The words sounded incredible. Even the most hopeful had looked forward to one more month of sapping and mining, and had seen in his mind's eye the last glorious stand of the garrison sworn to make the fortress its tomb. But the silence was convincing. The end had come with amazing suddenness, and the walls of the "impregnable fortress" had fallen, like the walls of Jericho, at the blast of a trumpet.

The letter brought to the Japanese lines under the flag of truce made known General Stoessel's decision:

"Having regard to the state of affairs at the seat of war generally, I find that further resistance in Port Arthur is useless, and with a view to avoid fruitless loss

of life I would like to negotiate for the capitulation of the fortress. If your Excellency agress to this proposal I beg you to appoint delegates to discuss the order and conditions of surrender, and to name a place where my delegates may meet them."

General Nogi received this message at eight o'clock on New Year's night. He read it with astonishment, for he, too, believed that the garrison would not surrender until the last fort had been taken and the last shot had been fired. Only three days before General Stoessel had convened à council of naval and military officers of the highest rank, and had laid before them the true state of affairs. The council was attended by twenty-two officers, and nineteen of them insisted on continuing the struggle. Three were in favour of making terms with the enemy. Among these was Col.—now General—Reiss, Chief of General Stoessel's Staff, who feared that if the resistance was prolonged and the city was carried by assault there would be a repetition of the incidents of 1894, and the remnant of the garrison would be massacred. General Reiss was not popular with his comrades, and his fears were denounced as a slander on a brave foe. The council separated under the impression that its decision was final and that the conflict would be continued with vigour.

It was with amazement and consternation that the officers received orders on New Year's day to destroy the ships in the harbour and to blow up one of the forts. General Stoessel had resolved to surrender.

General Nogi knew nothing of this council of war. He was, however, not ignorant of the fact that since the death of General Kondrachenko resistance had weakened and dissention was rife among the leaders of the garrison. Nor did it escape his notice that the proposal to discuss the terms of capitulation was undated, and had probably been written some days before. Next morning at four o'clock the answer was sent to the Russian lines under a flag of truce. General Nogi agreed to negotiate, and appointed as delegate the Chief of his Staff, General Kosuke Ijichi, with whom were associated Major Yamaoka, Chief of the Intelligence Section, Captain Tsunoda, Commander Iwamura, Dr. Ariga and Mr. Kowazu. The conference was to be held at noon on the second of January in the village of Suishiyei. "The delegates on both sides are to be invested with full powers to sign the capitulation, which shall take place immediately after signing and without waiting for further approval."

From camp to camp ran the rumour of this momentous decision, and was received with shouts of "Banzai!" But the dominant note was relief rather than exultation. A great burden had been lifted, and men breathed more freely when they realised that the long struggle was over, and that Port Arthur had surrendered without a last and bloody sensation.

Suishiyei was once a prosperous Chinese village between the fort ridges and the mountains on the North. Twixt the hammer of Japan and the anvil of

Russia it had been pounded into a heap of stones, out of which rose blackened gables and one solitary group of thatched cottages.

To this ruined and deserted hamlet came the delegates of General Stoessel and General Nogi. They passed through a broad gateway — which bore in Japanese characters the legend, "The road to peace"— and vanished from the gaze of a few casual spectators. Plum Tree Cottage—named after its owner—was a straw-thatched hovel consisting of two small rooms, which until a few days before served as a field hospital. Here the delegates met at noon. General Reiss, who represented the Russians, rode from Port Arthur with a small escort of Cossacks, and was accompanied by three colonels, the captain of the Retvisan, Count Ballascehoff, head of the Red Cross Society, a lieutenant and a midshipman. General Ijichi and General Reiss having shaken hands and exchanged compliments, presented their comrades, who conversed through interpreters. At twenty minutes after one o'clock the terms of capitulation were handed to General Reiss, who was invited to remain with his colleagues and to read over the documents. One hour was allowed for their perusal. Before the Japanese delegates retired to the adjoining room they were asked if the conditions were final. General Ijichi replied that they were final, but that he would gladly listen to any suggestions. The delegates then separated.

The conference was renewed at half past two o'clock, when General Reiss made several proposals and inquiries. He asked that the soldiers and sailors might be allowed to return to Russia; that the horses in Port Arthur should not be handed over to the Japanese; that each officer should be allowed one orderly; that the buildings of the Red Cross Society should remain the property of the Society and should not be changed; that a telegram might be sent to the Czar requesting leave to accept parole; and that a certain amount of personal baggage should be permitted to each officer. The battle ships and cruisers, he said, had been destroyed, and the regimental colours had been burned, so that none of these could be surrendered.

General Ijichi replied that the soldiers and sailors must be treated as prisoners of war; that the horses must be handed over; that each officer would be allowed one orderly; that the buildings of the Red Cross Society would remain untouched; that a telegram would be sent to the Czar provided it was written in English; that officers would be allowed to take with them personal baggage equal in amount to that of Japanese officers of the same rank.

While these points were under discussion a message arrived by telephone from General Nogi's Headquarters to the effect that a serious fire had broken out in Port Arthur, and that some deserters from the forts had passed beyond the enemy's lines. General Ijichi warmly protested against such conduct, and threatened

to break off negotiations if there was any further attempt at destruction of property in Port Arthur. A letter was accordingly written and despatched to General Stoessel, who immediately took steps to prevent any further acts of incendiaries. At half past four o'clock the conference ended, and messages were despatched to General Nogi and General Stoessel asking for a suspension of hostilities. The armistice began at thirty-five minutes after four o'clock on the second day of the month ; five hours later a telegram was sent to the Czar, the delegates dined together, and fair copies of the terms of capitulation were made in English and Japanese.

The negotiations were conducted in English, the midshipman who accompanied General Reiss acting as interpreter for the Russians. At a quarter to ten o'clock on the same night General Reiss and General Ijichi signed the articles of capitulation, and Port Arthur passed out of Russian control.

Committees of Russian and Japanese officers were appointed to carry out the conditions of capitulation, and to attend to details concerning the persons and properties of residents in the city. On the following day Captain Tsunoda called upon General Stoessel to invite him to meet General Nogi, and to inform him of the message sent by the Mikado commanding that the garrison should be treated with generous consideration, and that officers should be permitted to retain their swords.

General Stoessel was anxious to know the whereabouts of General Kuropatkin, from whom on October the 6th he had a letter saying that he would soon come to the relief of Port Arthur. Toward the end of the same month he received another communication to the effect that General Kuropatkin had made his attempt and failed. Chinese spies none the less reported that the relieving force was already in the Kinchaw peninsula.

"Where is Kuropatkin?" asked General Stoessel.

Captain Tsunoda replied that he did not know, though he believed him to be somewhere in the neighbourhood of Mukden.

Thereupon the General took out a map, and pointing to the Sha-ho remarked that General Kuropatkin must be near that river. "Is it not so?" he asked.

Captain Tsunoda replied: "Yes. He was defeated by the army of Field-Marshal Oyama near the Sha-ho, and was compelled to retire after losing between fifty and sixty thousand men. Russians and Japanese are now facing one another on the banks of that river."

General Stoessel's next inquiry was after the Baltic fleet. Where was that?

Captain Tsunoda replied that according to newspaper accounts the fleet had not yet passed the Cape of Good Hope.

At this news General Stoessel looked grave and said with emphasis: "Now that Port Arthur has fallen it is useless for the Baltic fleet to come."

Invited to state what had caused the greatest loss and inconvenience to the defenders, General Stoessel immediately declared that it was undoubtedly the shells of the eleven inch howitzers. Since the arrival of these guns the defence works were practically useless. Speaking of men the General said that he had strongly opposed General Sakaroff's plan of constructing a harbour and dockyard at Dalny before the fortification of Port Arthur was completed. When the Japanese fleet attacked in February last he was filled with alarm, as the forts were only half ready and the garrison was between two and three thousand men. If the Japanese had known they might have walked into Port Arthur at that time.

General Kondrachenko was killed by a shell in North Fort. According to every naval and military officer with whom I have spoken, General Kondrachenko was the heart and soul of the defence. He was everywhere, and his influence was felt on all sides. In devising schemes of defence his ingenuity and energy were unfailing. He was to be found always in the thick of the fight, yet no detail escaped his vigilance and his resource, while his industry and his contempt of danger appeared boundless. With Kondrachenko's death the story of the brave defence of the fortress ended. There was none to take his place. General Stoessel might well speak of him as a hero.

Referring to the origin of the war, General Stoessel declared that from the first he was opposed to hostilities.

"Some people," he added, "believe that Admiral Alexieff was the real cause of the war. I deny it. Alexieff never wanted war. We were both in China during the Boxer trouble and knew the qualities of the Japanese troops. In that expedition the lion's share of the work was done by the Japanese and by my Third Division."

The real cause of the war, in General Stoessel's opinion, was the ignorance of the Russian people *(sic)*, who knew nothing of the fighting capacity of the Japanese. As for himself, he remarked that he ought to be in the North with his division. He praised highly the pluck and patience of the Japanese soldiers. The artillery he did not consider good at first, though he had since recognised its excellence, especially in concentrated fire. The General went on to speak of his own experiences. "I have served in three wars—in the Turkish war as a captain and Staff officer, in the Boxer expedition, and at Port Arthur. I have been thrice wounded. This time a splinter of a shell wounded me slightly on the forehead. I have served my country well, and desire nothing more than to end my days in the country with the members of my family."

Chapter XLII

THE TWO LEADERS.

General Nogi is a grim old warrior—a silent, sombre, passionate man. Every line of his spare figure and dark face, and every hair of his grizzly beard, stands for strength and energy and resolute will. That is one side of his character graven on the forts of Port Arthur. There is another side. When General Nogi grasps your hand and holds it fast, the stern warrior vanishes, and you are in the presence of a courtly soldier whose eye beams benevolence. A frank, cordial man, toward whom you are drawn as to an old friend.

Thus he appeared to General Stoessel when victor and vanquished met amid the ruins of Suishiyei. "I had not expected to meet so pleasant a gentleman," was the comment of the Russian commander. "He seemed more like a friend of long standing than the leader of a hostile army."

The meeting took place in the cottage where the capitulation of the fortress was signed. General Stoessel came early. The officer appointed to escort

him galloped through the fragments of the village in vain pursuit. Hot and breathless he arrived to find that the General had dismounted and was already in Plum Tree Cottage. General Nogi followed in due time. Firmly seated on a prancing bay he looked a born leader. Ten years had been lifted from his shoulders since the morning of the New Year.

Of the interview between the two soldiers I shall not repeat the details. It was characteristic that the first words should be of the Emperor to whose "illustrious virtues" are ascribed all victories.

General Nogi made known his Sovereign's command that the officers who had gallantly defended the citadel should be treated with the greatest consideration. "It is his Imperial desire that you should retain your swords."

General Stoëssel was grateful. "By the kindness of your Emperor the honour of my family is preserved, and that of my comrades." Alluding to the death of two sons of General Nogi, the Russian commander observed: "It is this readiness to sacrifice all on the altar of country that makes the Japanese so formidable in war."

Smiling, after the manner of Japanese when speaking of a sorrow of their own, General Nogi was glad that the lives of his children had not been given in vain. One was slain at Nansan, the other on 203 Metre Hill. "Both these positions were of supreme importance, and my sons died well."

At the close of the interview General Stoessel asked the Japanese leader to accept his favourite charger.

The offer was courteously declined on the ground that all spoils of war were the property of Japan. "I could not think of accepting so valuable a present for myself." He promised, however, to receive the horse on behalf of the Army, and to see that it was treated as became the charger of a gallant soldier.

The Russian commander seemed astonished at this self-denial, but appreciated the motive that inspired the refusal of his gift. When they came out of the hovel General Stoessel mounted his white Arab and, exhibiting its paces, rode back to Port Arthur. As he passed from the compound into the street his glance rested for a second on a burial party. They were exhuming the bodies of comrades who had laid long in the shadow of the cottage.

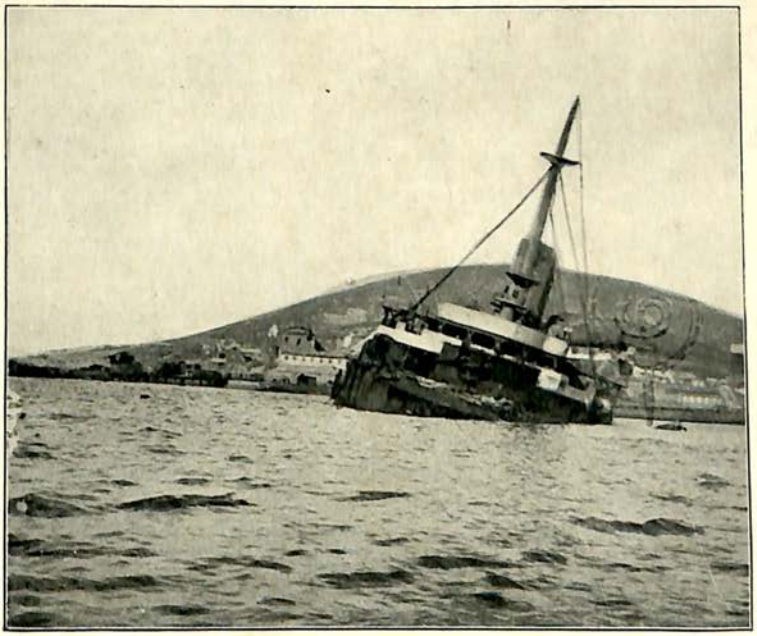
A week later—on the 12th—I saw General Stoessel once more. He was no longer on horseback. His herculean frame was wedged in a drosky and he was on the way to Dalny. In seven days he had grown older. His heavy face wore a strained and anxious look, and he had the manner of a man whose thoughts were not in the present. Such a look I have seen on the face of one who had gone through a fierce ordeal and was still doubtful of the issue—the face of a man waiting for the verdict. He was accompanied by his wife—a big, matronly woman—whose motherly eye glanced over a procession of orphans each armed with a doll. Madam

Stoessel was in black, and over her head was thrown a black shawl. It was a pathetic little group, though somehow it reminded me of Mrs. Cronje, wife of the famous Boer general, who also in like circumstances showed a fine contempt for feminine adornments. The railway platform at Choreisei was crowded with smartly-dressed Russian officers and ladies, several of whom were in mourning. The long line of open trucks filled rapidly with baggage and soldiers and sailors on their way to prison in a foreign land. They appeared to have no anxiety save that which arose from the risk of being left behind. General Stoessel shook hands with some of his comrades and embraced his aides-de-camp, kissing them on both cheeks. As soon as he entered the saloon carriage the signal was given, and, amid profound silence, the defender of Port Arthur vanished from the scene.

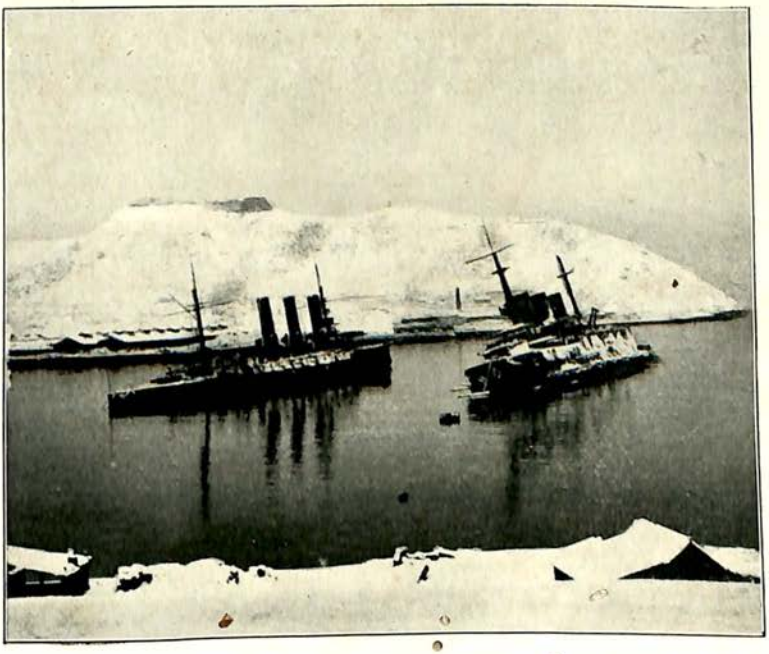
A veil of mist lay over the narrow peninsula on the morning of the 13th when I crossed the mountain range for the last time, and, descending into the valley, reached the main road to Port Arthur. Carts laden with personal baggage and droskies carrying Russian officers and ladies—healthy and cheerful—passed me on their way to Choreisei. Soldiers were mustering for review, and hills that for ten days had been silent as the grave awoke to a new and resounding life. Grim objects slipped by unheeded—trenches, barbed wire-entanglements, *chevaux de frise*, *trous de loups*, bomb proofs. They looked like familiar landmarks, and had

ceased to be engines of death. At the gate leading to the Old Town stood a Japanese sentinel keeping watch over a park of field artillery. We crossed an open space guarded by immense earthworks, and came at last to the town of long narrow streets and low houses. The shutters were closed and the place was deserted save for a few hospital nurses and children.

As we approached the harbour we began to realise that we were in a city that had been bombarded and besieged for one hundred and forty-eight days. Nearly every building bore marks of violence. When shells had been merciful, fire had not spared. A dusty heap of stones and charred beams out of which stuck the fragments of a printing press, revealed the sudden close of newspaper enterprise; and Sikh watchmen, who smiled a welcome to the English *sahib*, kept ward over smouldering shop and warehouse. Havoc reigned close to the harbour, which had been shelled from sea and shore. In the narrow dock lay the Amur—an inert black mass: and in the broader waters beyond were piled up battleships and cruisers that had swept the Eastern seas and defied the might and majesty of Japan. Maimed they were and broken, like warriors sorely wounded in battle—not dead, but sleeping with their armour laid aside. Crossing the bridge over a lagoon we peered into a submarine armoury. The shallow waters were paved with rifles and shells, and we felt that we had discovered the secret of the failure of ammunition, and the surrender of only thirty-five thousand small arms.



What we found in Port Arthur.



What we found in Port Arthur.

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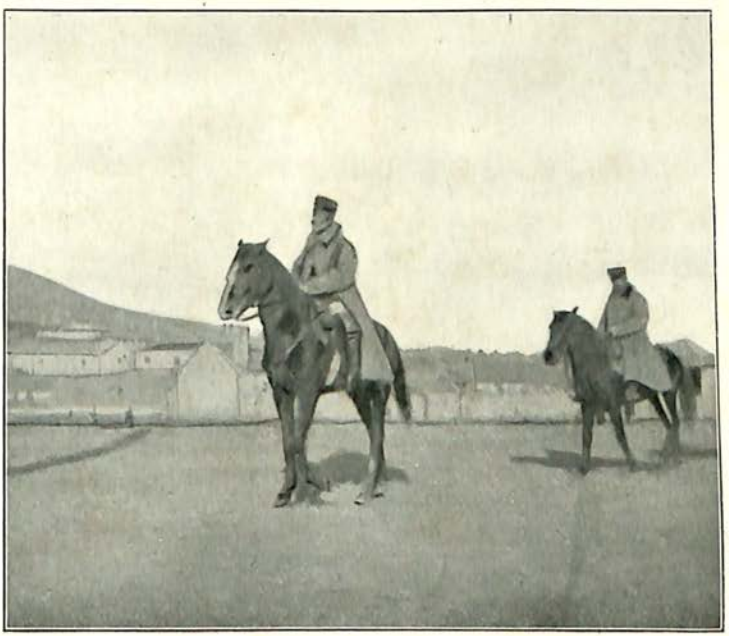
The New Town has none of the characteristics of the old. It is essentially new and Western. Trim villas and great edifices of brick and stucco rise from wide open spaces in which you can breathe and move. Here the damage was not apparent, and you had to look long and closely to discover traces of bombardment. Yet there were signs and tokens in the Red Cross flags that floated over every palatial building to tell of wounds and suffering that remained after glory had departed.

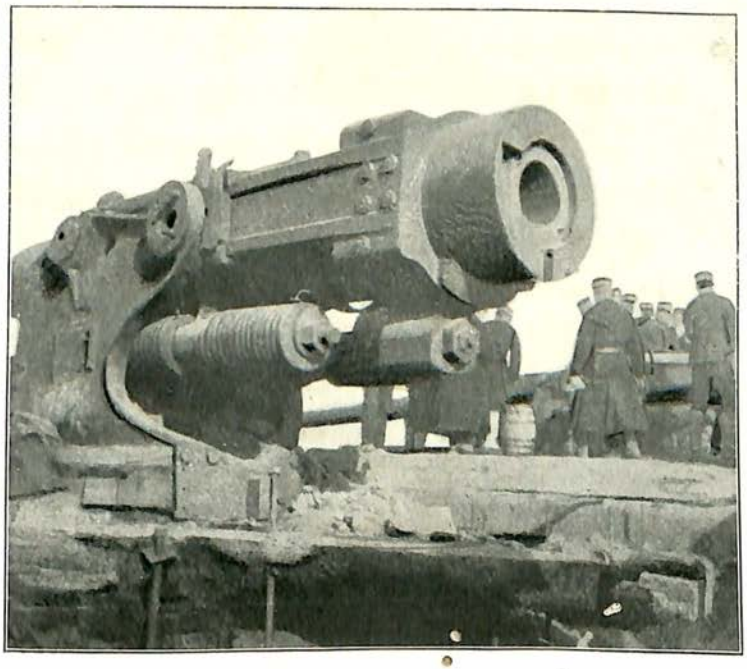
There was no time to investigate. Already the head of the column was in sight, and General Nogi and his Staff had taken their places to witness the march of the victorious army. For nearly two hours there passed before us a procession of sturdy men in long khaki coats, with bayoneted rifles over their shoulders. A German drill sergeant would have wrung his hands in despair. Even General Nogi was driven to use language that sounded expressive to foreign ears. Truth compels me to state that the Japanese look not well on parade. They are for use, not for show. Yet the sternest of martinets could not have withheld his admiration. They were soldiers every inch of them, and have proved it on many a bloody field. If they stepped high, if their faces flushed, if a proud and disdainful look came into their eyes as they glanced toward their great leader—who will find fault with their alignment and the regulated order of their march? I have seen the soldiers of many nations, yet none have

impressed me more than these men who are worst of all on parade. And the flags—the regimental flags. There was a romance of wâr hidden in the folds of every one of them that swept proudly past before uncovered heads. Some looked as if they had just been broken to the breeze ; others were mere rags clinging to bare poles. I would that I could tell you the story of each scar—how many brave men died in defending them, and how again and again they were snatched from dead hands to flout defiance in the face of the enemy.

At the close of this eventful day chance threw me in the way of some Russian officers, with whom I talked of the defence of Port Arthur. Upon one subject all were agreed—that General Stoessel was a man without real strength of character, who never visited the fortifications, and was always influenced by the presence of his wife and by the Chief of his Staff—a man whom the late Mr. Parnell would have described as "very good for afternoon tea parties." Without hesitation, they declared that had General Kondrachenko lived the fortress would not have surrendered for at least one month. "He was the heart and soul of the defence, and with his death came the end." Their faith in the natural strength of Port Arthur seems to have been destroyed. The first line of forts was, in their opinion, too near to the town ; the forts were not masked ; the guns were badly placed, and made excellent targets : the siege guns were not in turrets as they should have



General Nogi enters Port Arthur.



Breech of Japanese Siege Gun, Port Arthur.

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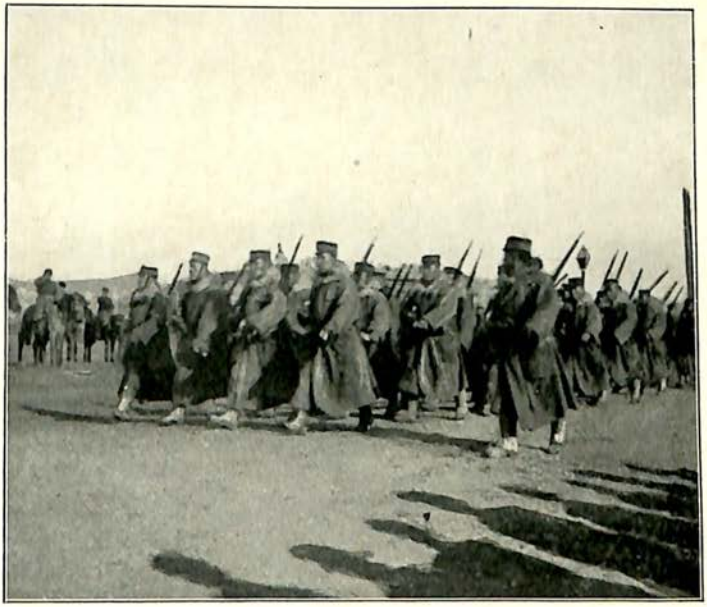
been ; there was no head cover for the gun detachments ; the bomb proof covers close to the parapets were insufficient ; there were no covered lateral lines of communication ; there was not enough observation points ; the reverse slopes of the hills were under indirect fire, and gave no cover for men or guns ; the second line of defence was too close to the first, and was practically useless. These are a few of the points upon which experts will dispute for years to come. Russian officers who were in Port Arthur are not likely to be moved by these controversies. They have learned from bitter experience that Port Arthur was not impregnable, and believe that time will again demonstrate the fact.

Chapter XLIII

WHY DID GENERAL STOESSEL SURRENDER?

It may seem ungenerous to attempt to pluck a few leaves from the laurels that adorn the brow of General Stoessel. But even contemporary history—ever indulgent toward splendid failure—ends by groping for the truth. When paeans are exhausted and the defender of Port Arthur is arraigned for criticism, his reputation is in danger of the reaction that follows a surfeit of praise. The Japanese, who are generous apologists of an enemy that kept them at bay for five months, wonder why the fortress surrendered. Knowledge of the stores of ammunition and food in Port Arthur and of the conditions of the garrison has satisfied them that the city might have been defended for another three months. Even Russian officers—military as well as naval—admit that they might have struggled one more month.

The capitulation of a fortress is justifiable on four grounds. The purpose for which it is maintained may cease to exist; its defences may be so weak as to lay it



Japanese marching into Port Arthur.

Snapshot of Madame Stoessel.

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open to immediate capture by assault; its ammunition and food may be exhausted; and the condition of the garrison from wounds and sickness may turn the balance of humanity against that of military expediency. Each of these reasons has been advanced in support of the surrender of Port Arthur. Let us consider them in the order of their importance.

Had the purpose for which the fortress was defended ceased to exist? Port Arthur served two objects. Primarily it was a naval base, and the hope of Russia was that the battleships and cruisers in its harbours would in due time raise the blockade and co-operate with the Baltic fleet. To this end, according to Admiral Wiren, the remnant of the Pacific squadron sought to preserve its existence by avoiding engagement with the overwhelming force of the enemy. The capture of 203 Metre Hill and the consequent destruction of the ships removed that hope and with it one purpose of the defence. There was, however, another object of almost equal importance. No one who was familiar with the conditions in Manchuria could doubt that the retention of Port Arthur seriously embarrassed the operations of Field-Marshal Oyama. It robbed the Japanese of the fruit of victory at Liao-yang, and reduced them to three months inactivity before Mukden. Every day that General Stoessel held out brought reinforcements to General Kuropatkin, and kept from him an army of one hundred thousand men experienced in the most desperate school of war. For that reason

General Stoessel ought to have kept his flag flying over Port Arthur until the last shot had been spent.

Were the defences so weak as to lay the fortress open to capture by assault? General Reiss, Chief of the Staff, and, probably, General Stoessel himself, held that opinion, and sought to avert the horrors of a citadel taken by storm. The situation at the moment of surrender may be briefly described. On the morning of December 31st the Japanese destroyed Sungshushan at the Western extremity of the Eastern fort ridge—the centre of the main line of defensive works. Sungshushan occupied a strong natural position, though it was under fire from the supporting fort and could be enfiladed from Idjesham—also a strong fort—and from Antzushan, a battery position, across the gorge of Suishiyei valley. These three positions remained to the last in the hands of the Russians. Late in the afternoon of the 31st the Japanese advanced from Sungshushan and seized the battery position, known as Eboshiyama, to the rear of the fort. At the same time the 9th Division made an assault on the Chinese wall, breached it near East Panlung, and, pouring through the gap, drove the enemy along the trenches to the neck between H. fort and Bodai, or Wantai. Before midnight General Nogi was in possession of all the higher hills of the fort ridge from East Panlung Westward to Sungshushan, except the supporting fort. On the first day of the new year the assaulting force was under the battery position of Bodai—a lofty height on the narrow

peak of which were posted two six-inch guns. Again and again this hill was stormed, and was finally carried with a brilliant rush.

From Bodai the Japanese looked down over the second line of defences into the heart of the city. During the night of January 1st—after negotiations for the capitulation had begun—when the Russians were busy exploding their battle ships with torpedoes and sinking small vessels at the entrance to the harbour, the Japanese advanced from Bodai to the back of East Keekwan. At two o'clock next morning the enemy blew up several mines in the concrete foundations of that fort and reduced it to a heap of *débris*. At dawn of the day on which the capitulation was signed the Japanese held the Western half of the Eastern fort ridge from East Keekwan to Sungshushan, and were firmly established along the centre of the main line of defensive works.

The second line of defence has been described as "strong"—a term that can hardly be applied to a line of entrenched hills dominated by the fort ridge in possession of an enemy. The fact is that experience revealed serious defects in the natural strength of Port Arthur. In some respects the Russian line was admirable for defence. It had a clear field of fire, excellent observation points, and commanded mutual support among the forts. But it had one grave and incurable defect. The line of forts was too near to the city, so that magazines, workshops, supply depots, and barracks

were under constant fire from the line of hills parallel to, and only four thousand yards from, the forts.

The question whether, under these conditions, the citadel was in immediate danger of capture by assault is one upon which experts will differ. It must, however, be borne in mind that the Japanese were not likely to renew the attacks that ended so disastrously in August and September. Experience had taught them to temper the bayonet with the sap and the mine. They had reconciled themselves to a scientific siege, and would not easily have been tempted to abandon this slow yet sure method for the hazard of another series of hand-to-hand encounters. Had General Stoessel been resolute to resist to the end there were positions still capable of defence that could have been reduced only by weeks of sapping and mining.

I come now to the chief reason assigned by General Stoessel, General Reiss, and naval and military officers, with many of whom I discussed the subject:—That ammunition and food were running short. Except in an official report of General Stoessel, it was never pretended that these supplies were exhausted. The Japanese declared that when they entered Port Arthur they found one of the principal magazines untouched. This, Russian officers emphatically denied. They asserted that the only shells were those in the forts, that there was no reserve of heavy ammunition, and that the magazine contained nothing save shells for small quick-firing naval guns. Of powder and rifle cartridges they acknowledged that

there was a limited supply, and the shallow waters of the harbour showed that many shells and rifles were deliberately thrown away. Official statistics published by the Japanese gave the number of shells left in the fortress at 82,670. We were not told whether they were for heavy or for light guns, though we may fairly assume that the greater part were for heavy artillery. Moreover the Russians were able to make use of the eleven-inch howitzer shells of the Japanese, a small proportion of which remained unexploded owing to the nature of the soil where they struck. The difference in the rifling of the Russian and Japanese guns made these shells available. Of rifle cartridges there remained 2,266,800, together with over thirty tons of powder, and the means of converting it into small-arms ammunition. These supplies cannot be described as great, yet they would have sufficed to prolong the defence for at least one month.

Food was abundant, and it can never be maintained that the garrison was on the edge of starvation. Some figures put this contention out of court. There were in Port Arthur at the time of surrender—1,422,000 lbs. of flour, 4,400 lbs. of barley, 176,000 lbs. of crushed wheat, 2,970 lbs. of rice, 30,800 lbs. of mealie meal or maize, 132,000 lbs. of biscuit, 77,000 lbs. of corned beef, 770,000 lbs. of salt, 44,000 lbs. of sugar, 1,375,000 lbs. of beans, 1,900 horses in fine condition, and 50,000 roubles in cash. In the naval depôt were five hundred tons of biscuit, 250 tons of new flour—brought one

month before by the "King Arthur"—400 tons of flour of earlier import, 40 tons of sugar, 2 tons of butter, some barrels of salt beef, 75,000 tons of Cardiff coal, 15,000 tons of briquette coal, and 55,000 tons of Japanese coal.

There was an almost inexhaustible store of vodka, beer, champagne and other wines—"too great a store," was the significant comment of a Russian admiral. Tobacco, cigars and cigarettes were in abundance. No private stores were commandeered, and civilians who had foresight or money suffered no privation—fresh beef, pork, poultry and other luxuries being obtainable at a price. The poor, for the most part, lived on black bread and tea—a diet not less nutritious than that of the Japanese soldiers, and one to which the Russian peasant and soldier is well accustomed. There was no lack of water, and vegetables alone were wanting.

The civilian population, which included five hundred women and children, looked in good health, and readily admitted that they had suffered little or nothing from disease or scarcity of supplies. Only seventy-five, including Chinese, had been killed or wounded by shell fire—about one-third of the number of civilians injured by casual shell fire in Ladysmith. It is due to the garrison also to state that every officer with whom I spoke made no pretence of having suffered from failure of food supplies. When a Russian officer admits so much you may rest content that he lived in comparative comfort. The men who marched to Pigeon Bay and thence to the railway station showed

no signs of starvation. Many had just been discharged from hospital, and nine thousand five hundred had been almost continuously on duty in the forts. Yet they were able to march nearly twenty miles and to bivouack in the open. I could not help contrasting their appearance with that of the garrison in Ladysmith during the last days of the siege. When Sir George White sent a few companies of picked men to try and cut off the retreating Boers, the men were able to walk only three or four miles and had to be carried back to Ladysmith.

There remains the fourth justification for surrender —a justification that may be pleaded by humanitarians, but not by those who believe that the first duty of a commander in the field is toward the living and not toward the dead and dying. The condition of the sick and wounded in Port Arthur was undoubtedly deplorable. Yet it was not so terrible as the first Russian statements led us to believe. In his despatch to the Czar, dated December 28th, General Stoessel wrote :—"The position of the fortress is becoming very painful, our principal enemies are scurvy, which is mowing down men, and eleven-inch shells which know no obstacle, and against which there is no protection. There remain only a few who have not been attacked by scurvy. We have taken all possible measures, but the disease is spreading. The passive endurance of the enemy's bombardment, the eleven-inch shells, the impossibility of replying for want of ammunition, the

outbreak of scurvy, and the loss of a mass of officers—all these causes diminish daily the capabilities of the defence, and the tale of losses of higher officers is an indication of the enormous losses we have sustained." At the conference which arranged the terms of surrender, Count Ballaschoff, chief of the Red Cross Society, stated that in the hospitals were over twenty thousand sick and wounded, for whom there were neither drugs nor bandages. That number was afterwards reduced to fifteen thousand. At the same time we were told that when communication with the North was broken the garrison in Port Arthur—exclusive of naval men—numbered 35,000; that between fifteen and sixteen thousand had died during the siege, and that there remained only between nine and ten thousand combatants, of whom five thousand were effective. We were also informed that fifty per cent. of the officers had been killed, and that only twenty-eight officers had passed through the ordeal unscathed.

It is impossible to reconcile these statements with the ascertained facts. Exclusive of those in hospital there actually surrendered 28,562 soldiers and naval men, not counting volunteers. They are accounted for thus:—Generals, 8; field officers, 57; officers below field rank, 531; officers in civilian branches, 99; surgeons, 109; chaplains, 13; non-commissioned officers and men, 22,434—total for the army, 23,251. Admirals, 4; captains of ships, 100; lieutenants, 200; chaplains, 7; sailors and marines, 4,500; civilian

officers of the navy, 500—total for the navy, 5,311. In addition to these were 3,645 men described as non-combatants, all of whom had either served in the army or were liable to be called to the colours, and most of whom had been volunteers during the siege. With few exceptions these 32,207 men were able to walk twenty miles to the railway outside Port Arthur, and to endure the exposure of a winter without bivouack without any apparent suffering. Moreover, when it became known that they were to be deported to Japan four thousand patients quitted the hospitals, fearing, as one of their own officers did not scruple to say to me, that they might be released and sent back to the war!

These figures—even more than the appearance of the prisoners and their capacity to perform a long march—show that the conditions of the garrison was not so terrible as it was represented by the Russians. Among the sick and wounded the suffering was great—as it must always be in an invested and bombarded city—and General Stoessel may have succumbed to the imperative calls of humanity. History will pronounce judgment upon his action, and will, doubtless, say that it was at least premature. Meanwhile, the impression must prevail that the last days of Port Arthur were less glorious than the first, and that it was the General, and not the garrison that surrendered.

Chapter XLIV

JAPANESE GUNS AND HORSES.

In all respects, save one, the Japanese field guns are inferior to the Russian. They have a shorter range; their projectiles are lighter; they are less mobile, and they are not quick firers. Their one claim to superiority is the high explosive used in the common shell. The battle of the Yalu is, perhaps, responsible for the extravagant estimate of the Japanese artillery. But it must be borne in mind that in the bombardment of April 30th it was howitzers, and not field guns, that wrought havoc with the Russian positions, and that on May 1st the Russian guns fired only six shots.

The Japanese are a practical people, and acknowledge their inferiority in this arm. In the Japanese army there are nineteen regiments of artillery, each under a colonel. Five of these are mountain and fourteen field, and their combined strength is one hundred and fourteen batteries of six hundred and eighty-four guns. Each battery is armed with the

Horse-shoeing extraordinary.

[*facing p.* 368

seven-and-a-half centimètre steel gun made at the Osaka Arsenal. Field and mountain guns are of the same calibre and take the same shell, though the difference in length, charge, and range is considerable. The tangent sight of the field gun is graduated up to 6,200 metrès, and that of the mountain gun to 4,300 metrès. The projectile of each gun weighs about eleven pounds, and the guns are not quick firers, though the recoil is reduced to a minimum by means of drag-shoes under each wheel. The time fuse in field and mountain guns can be set up to a range of 4,800 metèrs; the ammunition is not "fixed," but the cartridges are contained in brass cases, with percussion caps in the base.

So much for the gun which may be described as inferior—except as to the time and use—to the gun used by us in South Africa at the beginning of the war.

The mobility of the field artillery is seriously affected by the inferior quality of the draught horses. As we saw on July 31st one division was able to bring into action only thirteen field guns, notwithstanding the use of double teams. The horses are small and badly trained, and the march of the artillery in mountainous country is slow. These defects in material are not altogether neutralised by the skill and coolness of the gunners, who handle their weapons with the utmost confidence, and are clever in selecting a target as well as in aiming and laying the guns.

In the usé of common shell the Japanese have departed from the usual practice of European artillery.

There have, it is true, been occasions when they were forced to employ common shell instead of shrapnel, because of the limitations of the time fuse. But experience in Manchuria, as in South Africa, has shown that the effect of shrapnel is over-estimated, and that common shell with an explosive as powerful as that invented by the Japanese is often more destructive, even under conditions that would suggest shrapnel to a European gunner.

At the battle of the Yalu the combination of common shell with shrapnel proved irresistible against trenches and troops scattered as well as massed. In the opinion of men qualified to pass judgment we ought to pay more attention to the use of common shell, and should add a considerable proportion of such shells to our field battery equipment. This, I believe, will now be done, seeing that a new high explosive for field use has been invented.

On the other hand, the Japanese might learn from us the advantage of indirect laying of telescopic sights, of avoiding sky-line positions, of not always waiting for the enemy's fire, and of moving their guns in action so as to give the infantry their full support at critical moments of attack.

Many censures have been passed on the Japanese cavalry. It is only fair to admit that these judgments are based on observation of a few isolated units. No foreign *attaché*, and no foreign correspondent has seen even a troop of cavalry in action or on patrol.

This is not a country for cavalry, as the Cossacks have found. In the absence of evidence to the contrary it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that the Japanese cavalry horse—like the artillery horse—is poor and weak and badly trained; that his equipment is not made on scientific principles, and that the Japanese are bad horsemen and worse horse masters. Most of the horses that we see are stallions, and are noisy and disorderly; the saddles are ill-fitting, and are often on the withers of the horse; the seat of the rider is not well balanced; the curb and snaffle are in constant use, even at a walk. The result of these defects was a very large percentage of saddle galls and fistulous withers.

Having said this much in condemnation, let me give the opinion of a Japanese cavalry officer. There is, as we in Great Britain have long known, no more conservative soldier than the cavalryman—none more tenacious in upholding the traditions of the horse, the carbine, the lance, and the sabre in war.

"You condemn our cavalry," said the officer, "because they look poor and small by the side of your European horses. Well, our infantry soldiers are darker and smaller than the soldiers of Europe, yet they do very well, don't they?"

I had to admit this dangerous argument by analogy.

"Let me begin with the reputed defects," he continued. "Our cavalry horse averages between fourteen and fifteen hands, and weighs about one

thousand pounds. The average weight of a cavalry soldier, apart from his equipment, is one hundred and twenty pounds. He can march twenty-five miles a day, and on a good road can trot seven-and-a-half miles an hour—a little quicker than the Russian horse, and a trifle slower than the German. Judging by camps, the speed of the Russian cavalry is not greater than that of our cavalry. Horses enter the service when two years old; in the third year they are gelded, and do not go into the ranks until the fifth year. They have, therefore, three years training before they become troop horses. The object of this preparation is to develop their speed, endurance, and carrying capacity, to improve their physique, and to teach them habits of obedience. In the ranks they are neither quarrelsome nor noisy, and one dismounted man can easily control twelve or thirteen horses. I admit that there is a large percentage of sore backs, but in that respect we are not alone. In the Boxer Expedition I noticed that the British and German cavalry horses suffered from sore backs. At the same time I acknowledge that our twenty per cent. sore backs is very high. This is due partly to the structure of the Japanese horse, partly to the seat of the rider, to the shape of the saddle, to the bad roads, and to the constant changes of speed. Our saddle is not well made and is still ill-fitting. The Russian saddle is much better; it is lighter and more convenient; the numnah is attached to the saddle, and there is comparatively little weight thrown on the

withers of the horse. In the Russian cavalry there are few sore backs. The Japanese soldier is said to be always tugging at the reins. This is, no doubt, true, but our horses do not hold up their heads like foreign horses."

I ventured to suggest that this self abasement might be cured by not tying up the horses' heads between their legs as the habit is in Japan.

"As to our horses and the possibilities of improving the breed. Our original stock came from Korea."

Having had some personal experience of the vicious little brutes that pass for horses in that Peninsula, I am not altogether surprised at their descendants in Japan.

"The first attempt at improvement was made in Hokaido, where we introduced the American trotter and French horses from Anam, as well as a few Hungarians. The American and French horses proved failures. The breeding of horses for the army is under the control of the Agricultural Department—a great mistake, in my opinion, for that Department is apt to judge a horse by a standard other than the military. The Imperial Household Department has two stud farms—one in Shimosa and the other in Sendai. The Agricultural Department also has two stud farms in Kyushu and Osher, and has introduced the English hackney, the English thoroughbred, and the Anglo-Arab—a breed of pure Arab improved in England. These horses are distributed among the stud farms with

mares from the several localities. To prevent deterioration of the stock, regulations have been made as to gelding, but owing to the outbreak of war these regulations have not been rigorously enforced, nor has proper care been taken in the selection of brood mares.

"The organisation for the supply of military horses is simple. There is a central depôt, with branches in Nokaido, Sanbogi, Rokurhara, Kaijiyasawa, Shirakawa, Taisen and Takahara. At these branch depôts the horses are trained and prepared for service. There is, of course, some difference of opinion as to the best horses for improving our stock, but the judgment of the majority is in favour of the English hackney, the English thoroughbred and the Anglo-Arab for cavalry, and the Anglo-Norman for artillery.

"Our horses remain in the ranks for eight years. Their feed is ten pounds of barley and five pounds of grass, or failing grass, three extra pounds of barley. In camp they are fed three times a day and on the march twice a day. The diseases from which they suffer are anthrax, pneumonia, and indigestion. In one division fifteen horses died from eating poisonous grass, and two hundred from indigestion, due no doubt to the hard barley diet. I forgot to say that it is estimated that in Japan—which as you know is a mountainous country cut up into paddy fields and therefore not adapted to horse exercise—there are are 1,280,000 horses, of which, perhaps 300,000 are stallions, and that the yearly product is about 100,000."

"My deliberate opinion," added the Japanese colonel, "is that comparing one squadron with another the Japanese cavalry will not be found inferior to the Russian. Hitherto we have had no opportunity of testing our capacity in actual conflict. Here among these mountains we can fulfil none of the duties assigned to cavalry except those of reconnaissance and of guarding the flanks. When the army was concentrating at Anju, we acted as a screen through which the enemy could not penetrate to discover our force. Again at Wiju we covered the army from Yongampho to many miles East, so that the Russians were never sure of the point of attack. At Chonju the Russians had a big force of cavalry, yet they did not even attempt to reconnoitre."

Whatever may be my private opinion of the Japanese horse and his rider, I am sure that, had a real occasion presented itself, there would have been no lack of daring. The Japanese cavalrymen are very skilful swordsmen; but they are wise enough to recognise that the rifle or even the carbine is a more reliable weapon than the lance or the sabre. As to the Russian use of the lance. The circumstantial report of a French correspondent describing the annihilation of a Japanese squadron by the lances of Cossacks was a pure invention. No incident of the kind has happened. Only two Russian European regiments carry the lance, except on parade, and even they appear to have left it carefully at home, for not a single lance has been seen

save in a General Officer's escort. As a matter of fact the only regiment that ever carries the lance in Asia is the Cossack regiment in Turkistan. However deeply regretted by Lancer and Hussar, this picturesque weapon may be relegated to the museum of military antiquities, and take its place by the side of the jingal and the halberd.

Chapter XLV

CHILDREN AND THE WAR.

CHILDREN are the true hero-worshippers, and it is their nature to set up their high altar on the gory battlefield —the gorier the better. If you want to fathom the depth of "original sin" in the hearts of little cherubs who adorn the hearths of peace-loving citizens, you must become a General and win a great victory. Then your mail-bag will come with the seams burst, and the bulk of your letters will be in large, sprawling characters, that bespeak much travail of soul and inking of rosy fingers. You will have little worshippers and sweethearts in every land, and proud parents will discover their innocent babes setting forth in cold ink sentiments that might bring a blush to the cheek of Catherine of Russia and fill the breast of Torquemada with envy. And you will have to pay the penalty. A widow's importunity is not greater than that of the child whose mission is to write letters to the famous soldier. You will have to employ a special staff of corresponding

clerks; to keep a stock of signed photographs on hand, and to beg your friends to save all their old postage stamps, for the worshippers have albums and no scruples.

Lord Roberts, when in Bloemfontein, showed me some of his children's correspondence. One letter I remember. It would have driven Dr. Watts to a new verse, for it embodied all the terrors of the Spanish Inquisition. This is how it ran:—"Dear Lord Roberts, I am glad you have caught Cronje. Mind you keep him fast, and don't let him escape. Give him to eat everything he does not like, and then he will die. Yours affectionately. P.S.—Please send me your photograph and some stamps."

I am reminded of this epistle from a Christian child—who, doubtless, goes to Sunday school, and could recite the Ten Commandments—by a letter addressed to General Kuroki's Army from Harada Ishi, a twelve-year-old girl, who attends school at Yotsuya, in Japan. "One day I was taking a walk with my sister. Before the gate of a certain house stood a very little girl—very nice looking. She had with her a little dog, very pretty, and said to it:—'Tama, when the war is over, my father will bring back a Russian's head and give it to you. So you must be a good dog.' When I looked up at the gate there was a plate with the name Lieut.-Colonel Katsuda." Thus the daughter, not of Herodias, but of a gallant soldier in the Twentieth Century!

General Kuroki received many letters from juvenile admirers in all parts of the world. Most of them seem

to think that he understands English and keeps an unlimited supply of photographs and foreign postage stamps. Like Lord Roberts, he insists on an answer to all these communications. Perhaps I ought not to have made known this weakness. Lest he should suffer from my indiscretion, let me hasten to add that the General is thinking of some automatic and mechanical device that will give him time to attend strictly to the business of war.

The teachers in Japan hit upon an ingenious plan for diverting the stream of missives into a wider channel. They invited their scholars to send letters and drawings to the soldiers at the front. With the aid of an interpreter, I have looked over a batch of this juvenile correspondence. Some of the drawings are excellent, and show originality as well as artistic ability. They might astonish a drill-sergeant and make an artilleryman forget to load his gun; but even then the Russians would have the worst of it, for in the pictures, as in the field, one Japanese is a match for three "Ruskies," and a broom serves to empty Liao-yang and Port Arthur of the enemies of Nippon.

About the letters it would be as hard to generalise as it would be about the speeches of British members of Parliament when a General Election is approaching. One thing only is certain. The girls are better letter-writers than the boys, and a Japanese letter looks infinitely more artistic than the most finished Italian hand. Some of these epistles might be framed and

hung upon the walls of our drawing-rooms at home, in order to show how the characters which Japan has inherited from China live and breathe, and have form. Their contents are as varied as children's faces.

Here is a letter from a boy in the Higher Grade School at Aoyama. Sato Shoichiro evidently knows something of the origin of the War, for he writes :—

"Russia is one of the greatest Powers in Europe. Her dominion extends over one-sixth of the globe. She has an Army of nine hundred thousand men, and a Navy of fifty warships. Ten years ago, when we won the Liao-tung Peninsula from China, after great loss of brave men, Russia, backed by Germany and France, told us that the Japanese occupation of the Peninsula was harmful to the peace of the East. Therefore, we gave back the Peninsula to China. Then Russia got a lease of Liao-tung for ninety-nine years, entered Korea through Manchuria, and tried to press upon Japan. After many negotiations war broke out. Since hostilities began, Russia, one of the greatest Powers in Europe, has been beaten repeatedly by Japan—a small country of the East. Not a single victory have the Russians won on land or sea. Now Liao-yang has fallen, and Port Arthur is expected to fall soon."

Tanaka Sumi is a girl, and does not trouble her little head about history, though she reads the newspapers. She is twelve years old, and full of enthusiasm. "'Extra Special! Latest Edition!' The cry of the newsvendor rings through the street. I always buy a

'Special' and show it to my parents. They read it, for it contains news of victory. Our soldiers are fighting, and endure all sorts of suffering and privation. What fortune for us at home to have been born in such an age! Port Arthur will soon fall. Then another 'Extra Special!' Such repeated victories and no defeats are unexampled in history. We thank you brave men of the Japanese Army and Navy."

There is at least one little girl in Japan who wishes she was a boy. "I am sorry for the soldiers. We are much obliged to you. I, too, want to go to the front. But I cannot, for I am a girl. Please forgive me." Chikako Makino is a little Martha of ten years:—"I want to send cakes and tobacco to those who have gone to the war for our country." Another ten-year-old, Masako Asada, also a girl, as you may guess, writes:—"Thank you very much for fighting so bravely—fighting not only with the Russians, but with a bad climate and with bad insects. Thank you very much. Now it is getting cold. Please take care of yourselves."

Uyemura Kei is a poet and a philosopher, though only eleven years old, and a girl. Her letter from Fujimi School is very pretty, and ought to be treasured by the lucky soldier to whom it is given. "There is a Japanese spirit, as there is an English and an American spirit. Each has its characteristics. The Japanese spirit is pure and noble. It is like unto the cherry blossom. The cherry blooms beautiful, and without a breath of regret is blown to the winds of heaven. So we live and so we

die, counting as naught the life we give for our country. That is the secret of victory. Japan is small, but every Japanese has this spirit at his birth, and is ready to die for Emperor and Fatherland. Therefore, great Russia is beaten."

Sasaki Shinki, of Koto School, is only ten years old, yet he has some of this spirit, and will one day fight for his country. "Japanese soldiers are ready to lay down their lives for loyalty. They have the Japanese spirit, and, therefore, win every battle. When we grow up we want to be soldiers and fight for Fatherland." Little Miss Nagata, who is nine years old, doubtless, speaks the mind of many tiny mites in kimonos who had fathers and brothers at the war. "You are all very strong. So you always win victories. I am glad of it. I hope the war will soon be over and you will come home." Kamoshita Kan, a seven-year-old boy of Bancho School, is a confident prophet, for he writes:—"You fight for Emperor and for us. You are victorious always. Very soon you will go to Harbin, and the Sun-flag will wave over that city. Then I will shout 'Banzai!' for the Emperor." Yoshida Ryukichi, another seven-year-old boy of Mikawadai School, ought to make a good Special Correspondent under rigorous censorship:—"When Japanese advance, Russians flee. Some Russians are captured. The Czar is crying."

Here is a letter from a sympathetic little miss, Nakagawa Tomiyo, first-year girl in the Lower Grade School at Awaji:—"Soldiers, give victory to Japan. I

am glad. Soldiers, you must be tired. I sympathise with you." Ten-year-old Yamaguchi Ume, of Okachi-maeh, writes :—"Soldiers are working hard. Not much water to drink. Never complaining: ever striving: ever loyal to Emperor. Ah, how I admire them!" These children's letters all breathe the spirit of patriotism, and it must be acknowledged that in the expression of that spirit the girls are more eloquent than the boys. Kobayashi Fumi, twelve years of age, who is at Bancho School, writes :—"In Manchuria the weather is foul, and the enemy are said to be quite brave. But by your patient labour and courage we win victories, for which we have to thank you heartily. We admire the glory of our Emperor and the brave deeds of our soldiers. Whenever we hear the cry, 'Extra Special,' we jump for joy, and at the same time pray for your safety. It is getting very cold. Please, honourable soldiers, take good care of yourselves and come back to Japan with honour and glory." Kishimoto Toshio, though only twelve years old, is a thoughtful little fellow, and has a care for those who are stricken in battle. "The Red Cross Society has hospitals for the sick and wounded in the field. In Japan it originated with a so-called philanthropic association during the Civil War. It is proper to help soldiers without making any distinction between friend and foe. Both are brave men, fighting for their country."

The thoughts of the children turn naturally to rejoicing, and there are many descriptions of popular

festivities after the news of victory. I give one example, from Aoki Ume, who writes from Honmura School :— "I am a girl student of the Second Year Grade School. I am told by my teacher to write you a letter. When I was thinking what would interest you most, news came of the fall of Liao-yang. Then the citizens of Tokio assembled to celebrate the victory. Every street filled with flags and lanterns, and the night became as bright as day. The lights were reflected on the flags. It was very beautiful. We owe you much, for these nice scenes are the result of your victories. Banzai ! "

Chapter XLVI

COMRADES AT LAST.

AN INCIDENT OF BATTLE.

I TELL the story as it was told to me by an officer of General Kuroki's Staff. On a bare hill-top, strewn with the debris of war, lay fourteen wounded soldiers. Through the long, hot day they had fought, and now the tide of battle swept on, leaving them like wreckage cast up by an angry sea. Eight were bearded men and six were smooth-faced Japanese. The golden mist that glowed among the giant millet was tinged with crimson. Night was about to add her terrors to the stricken field. As the shadows stole up the mountain a strange fear crept into the hearts of these men. Their eyes grew wide with dread at the sights and sounds amid which they might sleep the sleep that knows no waking. Darkness could not hide the horrors that had burned

into their brains. To each grim detail the waning light gave new and awful realism. Dead eyes looked out from under the peaked caps: the broken bayonets bled: grisly hands held the paper fans: crimson gashes gaped under the red shoulder straps: skeleton fingers turned over the stained page of pocket book and diary: fountains of blood welled out of rent garments and linen bands and strips of cloth that anguished hands had pressed into riven flesh: writhing forms covered the purple stains: livid arms rose from the red earth and beckoned to the common grave: the fragments of shell, the spent bullets, the empty cartridge cases and shattered rifles roared and hissed and spluttered and flashed—all the nameless horrors of the battlefield took shape and sound in the twilight.

A great fear fell upon the survivors and drew them together. It was a slow and painful muster. Shot through the legs, Sato crawled to Tanaka, whose foot had been shattered by a shell. With one arm hanging limp, Yamada tore a sleeve from his shirt and pressed it against a hole in his side. Nakamura had a bullet in his brain, and lay on his back sobbing out his life through frothing lips, about which the flies made dark, deep lines. A shot had entered Matsumoto's right shoulder, passed through the muscles of his back, come out at the waist and lodged in his cartridge pouch. His foot slipped in a pool of blood, and he fell upon a Russian, kneeling with rifle clasped in his arms. The figure rolled over and rested at the feet of a soldier, with rigid

arms stretched to Heaven, whose face was a crawling mask of buzzing flies. Kimura was mopping the blood from his brow, and had ripped up his trousers to dress a wound in his thigh.

At last the muster was complete, and the little group of Japanese began to attend to one another's injuries. The Russians were less seriously hurt and assembled more quickly. Sato had taken off his putties and was binding them round his leg, when he saw the eight bearded men. Instinctively he looked round for a rifle, but Tanaka laid a hand on his arm. "Don't you see that they too are wounded?"

Sato went on winding the putties and took no more heed of the enemy. The minutes dragged on: the golden mist vanished from the millet fields in the valley, and a thin line of crimson stretched along the horizon. An awful silence brooded over the hill—broken only by the sputtering of foam from the open mouth of dying Nakamura.

Having dressed their wounds, the men began to look about them, and presently the eyes of the two groups met. A few hours before they were seeking each other's lives. They remembered the mad rush, the blistering heat of rifle, the thrust of bayonet, the wild shout, and the crimson wall that rose out of the earth and crushed them into darkness and oblivion. Long and earnestly they gazed, each striving to read the other's thoughts. Many stories they had heard of atrocities—of murder and mutilation and horrors of

which men speak in whispers. The Russians were eight and the Japanese only five, for Nakamura did not count, being as a dead man. Would they fight: would they wait until the night and steal upon them unaware: did they see how sorely stricken were their enemies: would they avenge the slaughter of their brothers?

To these inward questionings they sought answer in the faces turned toward them. "They look very fierce with their great beards, but their eyes are gentle." It was Tanaka who spoke—he who had checked the impulse of his comrade.

"They are brave men," added Kimura, who had bound his leg and was whisking the flies from the mouth of Nakamura. "Yesterday, when we stormed the hill, the Russians made a counter attack. They were led by a young officer who fought like a lion for his whelps. He fell, pierced by many wounds, and was about to hand his sword to Lieutenant Katsura, but our officer motioned to him to put back the weapon and said: 'No, I cannot take from a Samurai his soul.' The Russian understood. He was of the Samurai."

"Let us beckon to them to come over," suggested Tanaka. "They will then know that we have no evil design." The signal was given, and the eight bearded men came without hesitation. Gravely saluting, they seated themselves on the ground by the side of their friends—the enemy. Of one another's language they understood not a word. But speech is a habit, and is not to be suppressed merely because it is useless. The

men talked, and their voices grew louder and louder, as voices are apt to do when they produce no impression. When your words are simple and clear it is hard to distinguish between ignorance and deafness. After a time the visitors fell back upon signs, but to the Japanese signs are as unintelligible as Sanscrit. Then they began to examine one another's wounds, and shook their heads over the prostrate body of Nakamura, whose breath came in sharp gasps through bubbles of foam. Kimura put his hand into the pocket of his tunic and drew forth a book. It was a manual of conversation in Russian and Japanese—a collection of formal phrases and stilted sentences, such as no sane lips would ever frame. Yet they served, for presently Kimura and one of the Russians were busily turning over the pages and putting their fingers on words that seemed to embody the wisdom of the ages and the needs of the moment.

Before night came these men were comrades, sharing their black bread and rice. Sympathy gave them understanding, and though they spoke in unknown tongues it was established beyond doubt how many had left wives and children to pray for them in distant homes. Tanaka, with much labour and many searches through the manual, asked one of them if he was not glad to be wounded, seeing that he might return to his family and escape the perils of war. But Sato reproached him for suggesting that their Russian comrade was wanting in patriotism and would shelter himself behind a wound.

Thus the hours wore on, and night spread her veil over the ghastly forms that lay scattered over the hill-top and in the trenches. Very soon the wounds began to grow stiff, and fever ran like fire through their veins. Nakamura's sobbing had ceased, and his face was rigid in death. Kimura rambled in his talk and cried for water to quench the fires within. Sato lay back, and would have groaned in his agony but for the presence of his comrades—the Russians. They understood, for one of them rose, and taking three wooden bottles, pointed to the valley. He would fetch water for his comrades—the wounded Japanese.

Now every man in that little group knew the risk of such an enterprise, for he was aware that the hill was in dispute, and that Russians and Japanese were watching for any sign that might betray the presence of the enemy. The Russian soldier walked to the brow of the hill, and looked cautiously about him. Nothing was to be seen save the forms of dead men and the blackness of the valley. Though he stepped warily, his feet often slipped in pools of blood, and stumbled into holes dug by high explosive shells. His comrades watched him disappear over the crest, and waited. The minutes passed with painful slowness. Not a sound broke the stillness. He must have reached the foot of the hill. Even now he might be filling the water bottles from the shallow stream below. Perhaps he was returning, and this terrible thirst would end.

They strained their ears to catch the first sound of a footfall. What was that? A shot rang out, and pierced the darkness like an arrow that quivered in their hearts. Then all was silence again. The wounded men held their breath and listened. No sound came from hill or valley, and they feared greatly for the brave man who had risked his life. Long they watched and waited, none daring to give voice to his fears. He would never return, for in the valley he lay close to the stream, with a bullet through his heart.

Kimura's ravings had lapsed into unconsciousness, and Sato moaned aloud. From the little group rose another figure, stalwart and bearded. Without a word or a sign he departed. His comrades seemed unconscious of his movement, yet they felt that he had taken upon himself the agony of their thirst. He passed from the hill and vanished in the darkness, following the steps of his comrade. Hope revived in the breasts of those who watched and waited. Surely, he would return. Harm could not come to a brave man who risked his life for his enemy. Again that terrible note—sharp and clear—the note of a Russian rifle. He, too, would never return. The bullet of a comrade had dyed the stream with his blood, and the half-filled water bottles floated by.

The survivors on the hill watched no more. Night hid their suffering and their sorrow. At dawn some Japanese scouts moved cautiously up the slope, and from the brow of the hill saw the six Russian soldiers.

Two shots whistled over their heads — three, four! The Japanese knew the sound, and shouted to their comrades. The firing ceased, and the story was told.

Two nameless Russian soldiers rest in one grave, and on a wooden cross is written in Japanese:

"COMRADES AT LAST!"

APPENDIX.

GENERAL FUJII'S STUDY OF THE RUSSIAN ARMY.

General Fujii, Commandant of the Staff College and Chief of General Kuroki's Staff, wrote this interesting study of the Russian soldier, on the eve of the war. I commend it to the attention of military students as a valuable psychological document and a model of direct and terse expression.

"Our enemy is he who burned the city of Moscow and conquered the great army of Napoleon by cold, and hunger, and exposure; who fought against China with the allied forces of England and France, and who in 1877 defeated the Turks. For nearly thirty years Russia has encountered no foe, so that Europe knows nothing of her fighting capacity. It is clear, however, from careful study of former wars and from the present

organisation, training, discipline, and *morale* of the soldiers, as well as from the education of their officers, that the Russian troops are by no means so good as many critics imagine.

Let me point out their good and bad qualities :—

The training of the men is too formal. Lack of initiative and of independent action is the weakest point of all their officers, if we except the Staff and the officers of the Guards who are a little better in that respect.

The physical strength of the men is great—especially in their legs ; their shooting is not very bad ; their discipline is maintained not by training so much as by the remnant of feudal influence, yet they are not in any way chivalrous. They are, in short, imperfectly educated, strongly religious, and a naïve sort of people. Therefore, if there be a great hero to lead them and set them an example in the field they are not men to fear death, as was seen at Plevna, where they piled up corpses for earthworks and dashed into the enemy's trenches. Yet, if they meet any little reverse they are at once terrified and panic stricken, and run away in confusion. It is, therefore, necessary to frighten them at the beginning, whenever we meet them.

Strength and courage are their characteristics in battle, and we must, therefore, always be cool and careful, and never venture on any rash movement.

Attacks on a small scale they like to make in the night or at dawn.

They appear to have little practice in independent firing, and are fond of firing volleys at any distance. Such firing is not very effective.

Sometimes they occupy a position on the enemy's flank and try to enfilade. This they call a 'rifle fort.'

If they have even a trifling success they will strive to take the utmost advantage of it. We have to remember always that they must be beaten at the outset, however slight may be our victory.

Their outposts are usually stationed at a considerable distance from the main body, especially when they occupy a defensive position.

Their infantry often charge with the bayonet—but they have little skill in the use of the bayonet, and none at all in individual encounter.

Their infantry is not clever in making use of natural objects for cover, and fights awkwardly in uneven and mountainous country, though on the plain it is very clever.

Russian cavalry and sometimes infantry when retreating set fire to the villages, so that we cannot expect to find shelter and supplies in places they have evacuated.

The Cossacks often attack transport trains and lines of communication, and it is always necessary to keep close watch on both flanks. If once successful in these attacks they will make many attempts.

The Cossacks made no heroic movement in the war of 1877, and their reports were always exaggerated.

They invariably retire when met by a stronger force. If our infantry is a little careful we need have no fear of the Cossacks.

A Russian battery consists of eight guns; they have few mountain guns. In the war of 1877 their artillery was not able to accomplish much.

When at war with the Turks their higher officers were jealous of each other's success and fame; often they could not agree upon strategic plans, and were accordingly unable to make simultaneous movements of many divisions under one command. Notwithstanding that the Russians had a greater force of cavalry than the Turks they could not prevent the enemy from bringing supplies into Plevna.

Amid the snows of Shipka Pass the infantry suffered terrible hardships and yet made a terrific assault, but this was because the defeat of the Turks was no longer in question.

The Russians sometimes try to carry out the wildest plans; and we must neglect no point however impossible of approach it may appear.

In 1877 the men endured hardships well; the officers did not.

So changeable are the feelings of the Russians that though at one moment they may be in the depths of despair, a trifling success will make them bold again and remove all fear of their enemy.

In the war with the Turks there were many mean-minded Russian officers who placed their personal interest and comfort beyond every other consideration.

The Russians often endeavour to draw their enemy to a short distance, and then open a terrible fire of rifles and artillery. In occupying a position they pay little attention to their communications."

This estimate of the Russian army, adds General Fujii, is derived "simply from what I have read and heard. It is, of course, essential that we should take advantage of their weak points and avoid their strong points. Their troops are by no means anything to be afraid of, yet it would be a mistake to under-rate them. The execution of our plans must always be after more than sufficient reconnaissance and preparation, but, once begun, the battle, in whatever circumstances, must be carried right through until the enemy is crushed."

RUSSIAN ESTIMATE OF THE JAPANESE SOLDIER.

FROM this Russian study of the Japanese army I make the following extracts :—

"The Japanese soldier is short in stature; his physical development is imperfect, but his frame is healthy, and though a trifle slow in action he is ingenious and quick of understanding. Light hearted and ingenious, his chief qualities are perseverance and unselfishness. He can march great distances on very little. His wants are few because of the extreme simplicity of his home life. During the Boxer trouble in 1900 some of the Japanese papers complained that the soldiers were required to do long marches with heavy equipment, and were much exhausted. The Japanese are a military race; they take readily to a soldier's life and adapt themselves easily to discipline, non-commissioned officers and men observing even the minutest detail of their training and discipline.

The training of the Japanese Army is modelled on the German system of 1880, with some modifications. The infantry, whether in company or in battalion, are clever in manœuvring; their movements are rapid and precise, and they have wonderful capacity for marching. Their non-commissioned officers are soldiers of some

years service; they are intelligent and ingenious, and are capable of dealing independently with situations as they arise. Their company commanders are intelligent and skilled in the management of men.

Japanese cavalry horses are very poor, weak, and badly trained, and are not quiet in the ranks. Every man rides after his own fashion, and, generally, his seat is neither well balanced nor easy. Curb and snaffle are used all the time; the speed of the horses is not well regulated, and the horses do not trot. On the march they do not keep together. These defects show that the Japanese have no good cavalry instructors, and are not trained in the management of animals. This is due partly to the physical character of Japan, which has few wide plains, and offers few facilities for horsemanship. The cavalry equipment is not uniform, and is not scientifically made. The saddle is often on the withers of the horses, so that when they move quickly the riders are much shaken, and the animals develop saddle galls and fistulous withers.

The material and equipment of the artillery are fairly good. The horses, however, are small and badly trained, and on the march the batteries—especially those of later invention—are slow. The gunners are clever in handling their weapons, in loading, aiming, and selecting a target. They are wonderfully cool, and handle their guns with the utmost confidence, but in training and discipline they are inferior to the infantry. In shooting, their accuracy is about the same as our own.

The infantry march in column of fours; the cavalry in column of threes, and the artillery in single column. The average speed of a detachment of these arms is from four-and-a-half to five Russian miles an hour. Twenty-five paces separate battalions; forty paces separate regiments. They march in large bodies, their columns extending over a great distance, a halt of from one-and-a-half to two hours being made in each march. In war, the Japanese send in front an independent body of horsemen, usually the whole of the cavalry attached to the column. The advance guard consists of about one-quarter of the infantry, from one-seventh to one-third of the artillery, a company of sappers, and a troop of cavalry. From this is drawn the vanguard—a small detachment of infantry and cavalry. The "point" is composed of specially selected cavalry, and sends out patrols to the front. They have neither flank guards, nor fixed patrols. Occasionally they send patrols to examine the locality and to report upon the character and topography of the district. As in the Russian army, the duties of the advance guard vary with the force that follows, with the distance marched, and the physical features of the country. When the advance guard of a division is in hilly country, it always sets out one hour earlier than the main body. The component parts and order of a column are as follows:—As point, a small body of cavalry—about half a squadron—followed by a large body of infantry, all the artillery, the rest of the

infantry, the engineers, and the bridging sections, followed by a small rear-guard. One or more divisions advance along several roads, and the advance guard is sent from one column—generally the central. Connection among columns marching in the same direction is very weak. When retiring, the formation is the same as when advancing, though the retirement is covered by a rear guard, whose strength and distance from the main body are the same as those of an advance guard in an advance.

Five or six military cyclists are attached to each regiment, and do the work of orderlies and patrols. Sometimes cyclists are with the advance guard or with the point. In a country like Japan, where roads are good and horses few, there is room for military cyclists to compete with mounted orderlies. The first baggage follows the regiment; the second baggage is two miles behind the rear guard. A divisional train is divided into two lines, the first line of wagons being a day's march from its main body, and the second line two days march behind the main body.

In choosing quarters the Japanese are nearly always indifferent to their distance from the enemy, and to any other circumstance. The infantry are placed in front, then the artillery, and after these the cavalry and transport trains. The advance guard is stationed about one mile from the main force, and goes into quarters. The soldiers, when in quarter, never undress.

In the service of security, from one to several companies of infantry are used. Each company sends out a small number of sentries, who are posted at a distance of two miles from the main body. About half a mile behind these is a larger number of sentries. Each post has three men, one of whom patrols a short distance in front of the post. From the picquets patrols are sent along the line of sentries. Picquets and patrols —large and small—go into quarters, but are ready for battle at any moment. When the post of an advance guard reaches the line of sentries, the men engaged in the service of security rejoin the main body.

The duties of reconnaissance and cavalry patrols are the same as in the Russian army. Their reports are usually very detailed, accurate, and trustworthy. When a cavalry patrol meets an enemy it takes up a defensive position, but retires if threatened by a small body of infantry. Japanese infantry patrols are clever in reconnaissance.

The method of fighting, as observed in manœuvres, is after this manner. The fighting body of skirmishers, firing line and supports. There is no separate support attached to these. Each company sends out skirmishers to the number of two sections, and as they are not in extended order they are practically in close order of one line with a short space between the sections. In the firing line the men usually lie down and take advantage of any cover. Non-commissioned officers and commanders of sections kneel on one knee three paces

behind the firing line. The supports take their place from forty to fifty paces behind the firing line, and when the skirmishers are stationary for some time the supports kneel on one knee with the rifle close to the leg. Before the firing line extends for an advance the officers go forward to reconnoitre the ground and conditions, thereby exposing themselves and offering a good target.

When a company of infantry is ordered to take a position it advances in close order, and on reaching the position sends out skirmishers, but has no flank guards. Infantry fire is independent or by volleys. Volley firing is adopted at long range, independent fire within a thousand paces. Fire discipline is regulated by company and section commanders, who point out the target and give the range. Their estimate of distances is often wrong. Independent firing is ordered by whistle of the company commander repeated by non-commissioned officers. In sighting and loading their rifles the men are quick and accurate. To reinforce the firing line the supports are added. The supports form in extended order and fill up the spaces between the sections. If additional reinforcements are needed the supports extend and move forward between the companies which are already in extended order. When still further help is required a part of the supports form a second extended firing line behind the first line. In this case the first line lies down, while the second stands or kneels. The reinforcement of the firing line is very quick after the

fight has begun. In short, within a few minutes after the firing has commenced the skirmishing line can be strengthened, and the firing line consists of many extended lines; and all the supports are in action within twenty or twenty-five minutes. In executing this manœuvre the fighting force must move in front of the enemy, quite exposed, to extend its flanks.

We have observed that when on the defensive there is great confusion if the flanks are threatened by a turning movement. In advancing, the firing line moves at the ordinary pace until near the enemy, when the advance is at the double. Rushes are made forty or fifty paces from the enemy. Sometimes each body rushes forward independently. All the supports double after the firing line, and the advance is usually confused. The men crowd together and move forward obliquely, exposing their flank. They seldom fire when advancing; the retirement of the firing line is always disorderly and too quick; they do not fire until they have returned to their original position.

To defend a position the infantry form a long firing line in extended order, and the supports are quickly extended. When there is time they dig trenches deep enough to enable them to fire kneeling. If there is no time to make trenches they take cover behind the line of defence, and each section sends out one man to a distance of twenty or twenty-five paces to watch the enemy. The man remains kneeling until the firing begins and then rejoins the line.

Japanese infantry never attack with the bayonet. They believe that against the modern rifle, bayonet attacks are impracticable, and that the issue must be decided by powder and shot. Accordingly they employ rapid fire. The rapidity of the fire varies with physical features of the country, and at distances of from three hundred to eight hundred paces. The fire tactics in defence are as follows: When the enemy approaches within eight hundred or three hundred paces, a special signal is given and the firing line leaves the trenches, shouting, "Yah!" fixed bayonets, advances forty or fifty paces. At the same moment the supports draw near to the firing line, forming a second line and open fire standing. Leaving cover the defensive force is exposed in the open—an easy target for rifle and artillery.

The cavalry take little part in actual fighting, and rarely keep watch on the flanks. They are always anxious to seek shelter behind the fighting line, and do not take advantage of any opening to attack the enemy. Even when they see an excellent opportunity they do not ride rapidly forward, being more anxious not to fall off their horses than to quicken their pace.

The artillery take up an independent position, and in defence of the guns—about one third—are held in support. Generally speaking the choice of positions is very bad, and the field of fire is very narrow and limited. In the open field the artillery constructs empalements When advancing to a fighting position

the order is not good; the speed is slow and the guns are exposed to the enemy's fire. After reaching a position from three to seven minutes elapse before they open fire. Though the firing is regular and orderly, though the gunners are brave and the handling of the guns is cool and collected, the practice is slow. The artillery does not change position during a fight, so that it cannot give proper assistance to the infantry in attack. On the defensive the artillery does not open fire immediately, even though it may see an effective target, but waits for the enemy's fire. The ammunition wagons are placed near the guns, and the rapidity of the fire increases more or less as the battle proceeds. In the fight at Peichilii in 1900 the Japanese papers complained that the artillery was generally unsatisfactory.

The engineers belong to the advance guard. They repair the roads and lay the telegraph and telephone wires between the advance and rear guards. The telegraph and telephone communications are quickly made. The engineers do active work, taking the chief part in constructing cover and empalements for the gunners. The work is done quickly and looks substantial, though not always suited to the local conditions.

The chief characteristics of the different arms are summed up in these sentences.

In defence they like to take a position with a wide range of front.

In offensive movements the order and position of the different arms are the same whatever the conditions.

In marching, as well as in fighting, the flank guard is imperfect.

On the march the main body is separated by a long distance from the advance guard, which, unaided, must engage the enemy for some time.

The objective in attack is not definitely pointed out.

They use their supports too quickly, and exhaust their strength to repel the enemy when the latter attempts a flanking movement.

They do not recognise the necessity of continuing a fight until within reach of the bayonet.

They avoid covered places, especially in mountainous country.

They make frontal attacks without attempting turning movements.

In defence they are at little pains to avail themselves of natural cover, and are content with trenches and empalements.

When a retreat is ordered the main body of the infantry is first to retire, then all the guns, and finally the remainder of the infantry.

They do not like night attacks or night marches.

In an army of more than two divisions each division has a commander, so that there is no connection among the divisions, and the action of each is independent."

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